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ABSTRACT

The problem of early school leavers within a system that offers a wide range of vocational training at the secondary level is examined. Focus is on factors that influence a student to opt for a vocational program rather than remaining in a comprehensive high school or dropping out of school. By means of interviews and school attitude questionnaires, data were collected from 96 tenth-grade vocational students and 114 early school leavers in two Rhode Island communities. Additional information was gathered through school personnel interviews and school records. The findings include the following: the dropout rates for vocational schools are lower than their affiliated high schools; vocational students as compared to early school leavers had fewer school absences, better grade averages, and higher scores on intelligence tests and the California Achievement Test; and, for the most part, vocational students were career-oriented and chose their vocational program because it fit their future plans. (This report concludes with several suggestions for improving vocational education and dealing with potential school dropouts. The appendix includes the interview forms, school attitude questionnaires, personnel questionnaire, school record data collection sheet, a list of programs in Rhode Island for dropouts, and a list of courses and extracurricular activities common to urban and suburban schools.) (EM)

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Vocational Education Early School Leaver Study

FINAL REPORT

U S DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
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CHAPTER I. INTRODUCTION

Rationale for the Study

In a society where increasing importance is attached to a high school diploma, the problem of early school leavers has become a crucial issue. Many unskilled and semi-skilled jobs now carry the requirement of high school graduation, yet, the numbers of young people who leave school prior to graduation remain high. This group has problems obtaining employment and often is unhappy with the job opportunities that are available to them. As a result, early school leavers have a high rate of unemployment and a low level of life satisfaction.

In recognition of this growing problem, numerous studies and programs have been initiated during the past twenty years in an attempt to find effective ways of dealing with the dropout problem. Many of these studies and programs assume that job skills are of primary importance to young people who do not complete high school. For this reason, vocational training for the dropout and the potential dropout is an area of increasing interest. In Rhode Island, there are secondary school vocational programs that seek to prepare students for gainful employment. Questions that need to be addressed are whether these programs provide sufficient incentive to keep those in school who would otherwise drop out, and if these programs are indeed available to the potential dropout.

The present study examined the problem of early school leavers within a system that offers a wide range of vocational training at the secondary level. The Rhode Island Department of Education Student Flow Survey and the Vocational Education MIS (Management Information System) were used as the basis for this needs assessment. The study focused on the factors

that influence a student to opt for a vocational program, rather than remaining in a comprehensive high school or dropping out. Information related to subjects' perceptions and attitudes, home, family and social environment, and school situation were also examined.

Study methods included interviews, questionnaires, and school record information. School administrators were interviewed to determine their assessment of the dropout problem and their perceptions of vocational education.

There are many explanations given as to why people drop out of school. Some blame the family, some blame the schools, some blame the victim. The present study sought to address the question: Is dropping out a problem in itself, or is it one symptom of a larger problem? And, once the problem has been identified, what do we do about it?

Research Questions

Four research questions were formulated for the study:

1. Are vocational education students more or less likely to leave school than their peers in comprehensive high school programs?
2. Are certain factors, such as attendance, grades, IQ and test scores, predictors of dropouts?
3. What factors contribute to the decision to enter vocational education programs?
4. What factors contribute to the decision to drop out of school?

In addition to addressing the above questions, the study obtained as many recommendations as possible from students, early leavers, and school personnel concerning school improvements that might reduce the dropout rates and improve vocational offerings. School profiles were developed for participating schools, describing course offerings, extra-curricular activities, and special programs. Study recommendations were based on statistical analysis of the research questions, as well as on the more subjective suggestions obtained from the participants in the study.

Definition of Terms

Vocational Education Student -

> Any student participating in a program: funded in part or in whole by vocational dollars; that as part of its content trains students with marketable skills; that includes career education, home economics, pre-vocation, or industrial arts.

Early School Leaver --

> Any pupil who leaves school for any reason before graduation or completion of a program of studies and without having transferred to another school.

Unless otherwise noted, vocational student was used interchangeably with vocational education student. The terms early school leaver, early leaver and dropout were also used interchangeably.

Limitations of the Study

Any study of dropouts must deal with the problem of obtaining a representative group of dropouts. The present project was no exception. Due to time and logistical constraints, it was impossible to obtain a random sample of dropouts to interview. Thus, the early leaver interview data cannot be generalized to the larger population.

Another limitation is the absence of data (interview, questionnaires, school records) from a sample of students in comprehensive high school programs. This is a limitation in that the total student population was not represented. However, for purposes of the present study, it was deemed adequate to draw from two components of the school population, the vocational student and the early leaver.

Caution should be observed in interpreting results based on subjective retrospective reporting, such as the interviews. One must assume that subjects can and will accurately report their perceptions and feelings. Rather than abandon the notion of retrospective self-reporting, it seems more viable to acknowledge the problem and conduct research that employs checks on the more subjective data. The present study accomplished this by utilizing school records and other objective data. It was felt that the benefits to the present study of self-reporting outweighed the disadvantages.

Directions for Future Research

Since the present study was a preliminary investigation, the findings gave rise to several ideas for future research in the areas of vocational education and dropout prevention.

A vocational education needs assessment should be conducted with students in comprehensive high schools. This assessment should include attitudes toward vocational education, knowledge of various programs, and availability of vocational education to the general school population.

The present study determined that vocational students and early leavers do not possess similar academic traits. A study of vocational students and students in college preparatory and general studies programs should be conducted to determine if these populations are similar. Knowing the characteristics of students served by vocational education would aid in planning program expansions and evaluating selection procedures. Another aid in planning program expansion would be an analysis of the number of students who apply to vocational programs and the number who are accepted. A further examination of selection procedures should focus on students who are admitted to vocational programs with waiting lists. Identifying the characteristics of these students would help to determine the basis of existing selectivity. Evaluation of existing entrance criteria is necessary in providing more students with access to vocational education programs.

Another future research project should focus on vocational students in skill centers and vocational students in regional facilities. Examination of school satisfaction, especially of students from sending communities, would be part of a study of this type. The success of regional facilities in serving students from sending communities should be further explored by examining enrollment quotas, administrators' perspectives, and students' attitudes in the sending communities.

A further study of the participation of sending communities in vocational education should include an examination of historical trends, which would explore such factors as: fulfillment of quotas, tuition, transportation costs, administrators' attitudes, and students' attitudes toward vocational education and their own high schools. This study should also investigate the acceptability of skill centers and regional facilities as perceived by sending communities.

Subsequent studies should examine groups of students who have chosen to drop out of vocational programs and re-enter a comprehensive high school or to leave school altogether. Such a study would be directed toward an assessment of some of the weaknesses of vocational education from a student perspective.

Another suggestion concerns the Vocational Education MIS and the Student Flow Survey. These systems should be studied to determine ways of using the available information more effectively in planning and evaluating at the state and local level. Data on early school leavers from vocational programs should be added to one or both of these information systems.

The present study identified the importance of career motivation and school satisfaction in the decision to enter vocational education. An examination of the origins of these phenomena at the early grade levels would facilitate career and vocational education efforts at the secondary level.

An experimental program that deals with dropout prevention through vocational education would prove interesting. Using predictive factors, a group of potential dropouts could be identified and placed in vocational programs. By following their progress over time, the success of vocational education in preventing dropouts could be assessed. A control group in comprehensive high school programs would be identified for comparison purposes.

Overview of Final Report

This report contains methodology, results of data collection, findings and conclusions and suggestions. Other aspects of the project reported here are school profiles, dropout programs, interviews with school personnel and early school leavers, and vocational student case studies. Additionally, a review of previous research studies was conducted and served as background for the present study.

CHAPTER II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Heightened interest in the high school dropout problem in the last twenty years has produced an extraordinary number of studies. From these studies, the basic characteristics of the early school leaver have been identified; he is likely to be a white male, sixteen years of age, from a low socioeconomic background. His school attendance has been irregular, at least in the year or so prior to his dropping out. He will most likely leave school permanently sometime during the tenth grade. His mental ability probably is lower than normal; he may have failed a grade, and his reading level probably is below where it ought to be. He may have discipline problems. He will leave a general course of studies in order to find employment. The underlying reason for his departure may well be that he has developed no sense of belonging to the school, a manifestation of his more general difficulty in communicating with and relating to people. He is likely to regret his decision to leave school after he has left it, and is somewhat more likely to be unemployed several years later than one of his peers who completes high school. He can be spotted with a reasonable degree of accuracy by the sixth grade, but the real reasons why he drops out remain problematic.

The number of students who enter grade one who will not complete grade twelve for any reason other than death averages between eighteen and twenty-four percent (Bachman, 1971; National Advisory Council, 1975). A 1973 Providence survey found that 13.6% of the senior high school mean enrollment would leave school before graduating, and by 1974 that number had risen to 14.6%. Student Flow information indicates that 9.2% of students sixteen and over left Rhode Island public schools during the school year 1976-77.

No significant difference exists between the number of male and female early school leavers, but the tendency seems to be for male dropouts to outnumber females by a three-to-two ratio. A Pennsylvania state survey found 62% of dropouts to be boys. A New Jersey study discovered a similar three-fifths proportion of male dropouts. Rhode Island Student Flow information identifies the same 60-40 male-female split in the ranks of early school leavers.

Because the legal age for leaving school in most states is sixteen, dropping out occurs most frequently at that age (Bowman and Matthews, 1960; New Jersey Department of Education, 1964; Maryland Department of Education, 1963; Providence Public Schools, 1974). The exit age in Rhode Island is similar to that in other states and nationwide. Most of these students leave in the tenth grade (Pennsylvania Department of Education, 1967; Providence Public Schools, 1973), although a substantial number leave the ninth grade, having been held back a grade at some time. Older children are more likely to drop out than those of normal age for their grade and are likely to do so before the tenth grade. In Rhode Island, Portuguese school leavers were more likely than all others to leave during eighth and ninth grades, probably because an initial language difficulty kept them back at least one grade in the early grades.

The total early leaver rate for Portuguese students was undetermined on the 1976-77 Rhode Island Student Flow, while Hispanics had four times the early leaver rate of the general population. Nationally, blacks in integrated schools have had the same college entrance and dropout rates as whites, but dropout rates have been substantially higher among blacks from segregated schools, especially in the north (Bachman, 1971). Minority groups in general are more likely to attend schools with higher dropout rates (Coleman, 1966), but whether the high school dropout rate influences

the minority students to leave school in larger numbers or whether these high dropout schools are more likely to be in working class or in lower class neighborhoods -- and hence subject to a higher dropout rate in any case -- is unclear. A large majority of blacks that drop out do so from general or vocational education programs. In general, however, race seems to have less to do with leaving school early than does socioeconomic status.

Far fewer blacks, Hispanics, Orientals, and American Indians are enrolled in vocational education programs than their representation in the general population would warrant. Those who do enroll are more likely to perform poorly and to drop out in disproportionate numbers (Homitz, 1975). The reasons for this phenomenon are unclear. Apparently, no direct relationship exists between the racial or ethnic identification of teachers and the dropout rate of ethnic students, although black vocational education teachers seem in some cases to make some constructive difference for black students.

Religious preference makes little difference in likelihood of leaving school early. Only Jews are much less likely to drop out than other groups, although there is some indication that students without religious preference are the most apt of all to drop out (Bachman, 1971).

Social status seems to make a great deal of difference in determining who drops out and who stays in. Larger percentages of students who leave school early come from homogeneous low status sections of cities (Bowman and Matthews, 1960). Communities in low income categories in Rhode Island have early school leaver rates considerably higher than higher income communities (Rhode Island Student Flow, 1977). Apparently, middle class children assume that they must remain in school whether they like it or not, while lower or working class children are more likely to consider leaving school a viable option (Jencks, 1972). In general, students from

high socioeconomic backgrounds are less likely to drop out and more likely, if they do drop out, to return to school later than are those of low socioeconomic status (Hathaway, 1969a). There is some indication that low socioeconomic status affects different groups in different ways: socioeconomic status may be more related to female than to male rate of early school leaving (Combs and Cooley, 1968), while cities with high white dropout rates tend to be occupationally disadvantaged communities. The same criterion of occupational disadvantage does not, however, serve as a valid predictor of the black dropout rate (Dentler and Warshauer).

The problem of confounding of variables arises with regard to socioeconomic status, however. Socioeconomic status shows a consistently strong relationship with vocabulary, intelligence, reading comprehension, and self-concept of school ability. It also correlates negatively with negative attitude toward school, test anxiety, and rebellious behavior in school. All of the above factors correlate independently with early school leaving. When the percentage of variance of these other factors is controlled, however, socioeconomic status still seems to account for much of the early school leaving, although not as much as one might first expect (Bachman, 1971).

Several aspects of performance in school also correlate with the rate of early school leaving. Studies uniformly show early school leavers to be irregular in attendance while in school (Bowman and Marshall, 1960; Barker and Mink, 1968; Maryland Department of Education, 1963; Providence public Schools, 1966). Lloyd (1976) even found absentee rates two to six years prior to dropping out to be a partial predictor of dropping out. About one-half of all early school leavers have failed at least one grade by the tenth grade (Bachman, 1971; Providence Public Schools, 1966). A correlation exists between mental ability and dropping out (Combs and

Cooley, 1968; Bachman, 1971; Maryland Department of Education, 1963; Providence Public Schools, 1973). Other studies indicate that mental ability may have less to do with dropping out than actual academic performance (Cervantes, 1965). Unquestionably, academic ability and performance are significant predictors of dropping out (Barker and Mink, 1968; Kelly and Pink, 1972). Dropouts from earlier grades are more likely to be lower on arithmetic achievement two to six years before dropping out (Lloyd, 1976). A majority of potential early school leavers' reading scores are below average (Bowman and Marshall, 1960; Bachman, 1971). Low spelling achievement also serves as a predictor of future female early school leavers (Lloyd, 1976).

In general, early school leavers leave school from a general curriculum (Combs and Cooley, 1968; Pennsylvania Department of Education, 1967; Providence Public Schools, 1966). A much smaller number appear to leave from vocational or college preparatory courses, but the few studies that mention the holding power of vocational courses differ on the results they report, depending on the year and the place in which the research was conducted.

Early school leavers are somewhat more likely to have been suspended from school and to have had discipline problems, although all dropouts have not, by any means, encountered this type of difficulty. In Providence (1966), for example, 60% of early school leavers had never been suspended, and one-half were reported by guidance counselors not to have had any behavior problems. On the other hand, those who have had the greatest number of discipline problems are most likely to drop out. Dropouts reported on the average more guidance contacts by ninth grade (Combs and Cooley, 1968); they were more frequently reported by their teachers to be discipline problems, and were more irritating in class (Barker and Mink, 1968). They

engaged in rebellious behavior and were delinquent before leaving school, especially having committed acts of interpersonal aggression and school delinquency (Bachman, 1971). In short, a dropout is not necessarily a behavior problem, but a behavior problem is likely to become a dropout.

The potential early school leaver is also less likely to participate in extracurricular activities (Barker and Mink, 1968; Cervantes, 1965; Maryland Department of Education, 1963; Providence Public Schools, 1966). Social involvement in school probably offsets academic failure in some cases, keeping likely candidates from dropping out in school (Kelly and Pink, 1972). Moreover, dropouts involve themselves in church and community affairs less frequently than do persisters (Bowman and Matthews, 1960).

This lack of involvement in school may reflect underlying personality characteristics that make communication with others and identification with institutions difficult. Bowman and Matthews (1960) found that potential dropouts display significantly lower capacity for status, socialization, communality, responsibility, intellectual efficiency, achievement via conformance, and achievement via independence than controls. Peers and teachers in the ninth grade saw these potential dropouts as aggressive and as lacking in leadership and friendship qualities. Hickman (1967) observed that dropouts blamed themselves for their failures. They registered low on temperamental traits of general activity, restraint, ascendance, sociability, emotional stability, objectivity, friendliness, thoughtfulness, and personal relations. Dropouts also tended to be hypercritical of people and institutions, prone to self-pity, and scored higher on anxiety scales. They were more egocentric, and identified with individuals more than with community or family.

Barker and Mink (1968) found in a West Virginia study that teachers and counselors rated future early school leavers as less liked by peers and teachers than stay-ins. Teachers also perceived potential dropouts as feeling sorry for themselves more often than completers. Barker and Mink failed to point out that these negative teacher evaluations may well have proved self-fulfilling prophecies with regard to the future dropouts. In any case, these teacher/peer personality ratings proved predictors of future early school leaving. In a Minnesota study, Hathaway (1969a) found that dropouts were more likely to produce invalid Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory scores prior to dropping out than controls. Their scores on various scales indicated pronounced tendencies toward being negative, difficult, odd, apathetic, and lacking in social graces. They also seemed less idealistic, articulate, conforming, optimistic, decisive, and expansive than a control group of future graduates. Barclay and Cervantes (1969) used an analysis of Thematic Apperception Test scores from dropouts to conclude that the early school leaver feels helpless in mastering or coping with his or her environment and that he/she is primarily concerned with basic physiological and security needs rather than with self-improvement or achievement needs.

Several researchers have used a Rogerian or Maslow-type congruence model to develop the personality differences between dropouts and non-dropouts. Using adult education students in his studies of dropout/persister attitudes, Boshier (1972, 1973) found that continued participation in the program was a function of self/institution incongruence, while dropouts usually possessed high intra-self or self-other incongruence. His findings were substantiated by Brown, Lynch and Jones (1975), who found that the greater the discrepancy between ideal self and actual self, the more likely the student is to drop out.

The interests and reasons for attending and remaining in school differ among potential dropouts and non-dropouts. Male dropouts score consistently higher on interest scales in labor, skilled trades, and music (Combs and Cooley, 1968). Female dropouts also scored higher than controls on labor, skilled trades, mechanical-technical interests, and hunting-fishing. Dropouts usually had lower occupational aspirations and more frequently indicated preference for job possibilities on the basis of avoiding dirt, responsibility, and working too hard (Bachman, 1971). The early school leavers' self-image, role expectation, and occupational orientation thus seem to be deficient (Cervantes, 1965). Their self-concept of their school ability is also low (Bachman, 1971).

Some of the personality problems of the typical early school leaver and many of his/her attitudes toward school seem to stem to a large extent from family difficulties. Parents of dropouts frequently are indifferent to their children's continuing in school, and often have not completed high school themselves (Bowman and Matthews, 1960; Barker and Mink, 1968; Jencks, 1972; Maryland Department of Education, 1963). The head of the dropout's household is likely to be an unskilled or semi-skilled worker. Occupation of father especially seems to have some bearing on the dropout's decision to leave school. Early school leavers tend to come from large families (Bowman and Matthews, 1960; Bachman, 1971; Hathaway, 1969a). Large families tend to be lower in socioeconomic status, however, so that the independent effect of size of family on early school leaving is difficult to judge.

The amount of communication in the family also correlates with the liklihood of an individual remaining in school. Poor family communication may breed those personality characteristics that make school adjustment difficult. Bachman (1971) has found that degree of parental punitiveness and the quality of family relations are associated with dropping out.

Cervantes' (1965) potential dropouts perceived their families as understanding and accepting each other "very little" or "little" compared to future graduates. They felt more unaccepted by their families, participated in less joint activity with them, and spent less leisure time with them. Dropouts had primary relationships with a smaller percentage of family members than did completers, and reported that, in general, their homes were less happy than those of the stay-ins ($p \leq .001$). The family/friend system for the dropout families was also less extensive than for completer families, and school tended to be more isolated and independent from family functions than for graduates. Dropouts also rejected parental advice more frequently with regard to choice of friends. In general, the dropout family tends to confirm low occupational and aspirational patterns, and frequently promotes faulty communication patterns which the early school leaver brings with him to the school environment.

The dropout seems to feel as negatively about school as he does about his family. Bachman (1971) found the dropout rate the highest among a group of students agreeing most frequently with negative statements about education. Cervantes (1965) discovered that orientation toward school and motivation were vastly more important than amount of funds expended on students in school or the physical environment of the institution in determining pupil retention rates. Interestingly enough, teachers seem to have less influence on whether the individual student stays or leaves than might be expected. A report on minority retention in vocational education programs discovered that teachers who were rated by students as understanding the problems of the young and of other races generally had low dropout rates, but the direct effect of teacher personality characteristics on school holding power is hard to determine (Homitz, 1975). In Cervantes' study (1965), youth perceived teachers as having negligible influence on their decision to stay in or drop out. Overall, Homitz (1975) found that the

most important characteristic in producing a low minority dropout rate from vocational schools was student perception of school as a friendly place. Also slightly related to school retention -- but only slightly -- were materials, supplies, spacious facilities, equipment, small class size, use of letter grades, teacher aides and team teaching/learning. The report on minority vocational education pinpointed as a major problem of the programs the lack of publicity by good programs, informing both the community and potential students of services offered.

Scales (1968) identified several factors of importance in holding students in school:

** Full-time counselor load of 350 students or less.

** Planned program of working with parents of potential dropouts.

** Summer counseling services.

** Regular follow-up studies of school leavers.

** Teachers of potential dropouts selected primarily for interest in students, secondarily for interest in subject.

** Classes for potential dropouts with twenty students or less.

** Potential dropouts assigned to special teachers so that they will feel that at least one teacher is interested in them.

** Grading of potential dropouts based on individual development, not on group norms.

** Occupational courses and units, including field trips to business and industry, stressed.

As to the actual reasons given by dropouts for leaving school, most attributed their leaving when they did to the desire to seek employment. For girls, marriage is the single most frequently given reason for leaving school early (Hathaway, 1969b). The next most frequently mentioned reason for boys and girls was lack of interest in school.

Both Boshier(1972) and the Maryland Department of Education Study (1963) caution against taking the reasons given by the dropouts for leaving school at face value: the student is likely to give an answer that he or she thinks the interviewer wants to hear. Researchers have offered a number of what they believe are the real reasons why an individual leaves school early. Bowman and Matthews in their 1960 study concluded that dropouts do not see education as a means to practical ends and do not value education as an end in itself. Later studies have modified these findings, however, maintaining that most dropouts value education but cannot see how it is possible for them to continue under the present circumstances (Hickman, 1967). It may be that the public relations campaign of the 1960's convinced potential dropouts that education had a value -- if only for obtaining a job -- and attitudes have changed. Or perhaps, in retrospect, the dropout values education after leaving because of subsequent unemployment or loneliness. Whatever the reason, from one-half to two-thirds of those surveyed regretted their decision to leave school after they had left it. Hickman cites lack of friends in the school setting as the major reason for early school leaving, while Cervantes (1965) lists a cluster of important factors -- reading ability, retardation, dissatisfaction, school non-participation, parental non-interest, and no friends at school. He adds that the characteristics of the dropouts are certainly apparent by the first grade in high school, if not by the first grade in elementary school.

What happens to the dropout after he leaves school? There is perhaps more difference of opinion on this question than on any other. Bowman and Matthews (1960) in their eighteen year old (and perhaps dated) study found the dropout to be employed less, in lower status jobs, both before

and after dropping out. Wolfbein (1959) also found marked differences between high school graduates and dropouts in employment patterns. Combs and Cooley (1968), in contrast, found employment patterns in dropouts and high school graduates remarkably similar in their study conducted in 1964. Dropouts actually were earning a higher average salary than graduates, probably because they had been working longer. Female dropouts earned less than controls, but the difference was accounted for by the fact that many of the unemployed had left school in order to marry. Bachman's (1971) longitudinal survey results, tallied in 1971, found that occupational aspirations differ more between college and non-college than between dropouts and non-dropouts. He found that employment of dropouts who were employed was not substantially different from those of the graduates. Bachman concluded that dropping out contributes to unemployment, but that the contribution of family background and ability is greater. Hence, dropping out is a symptom of the conditions of unemployment rather than the cause. Hathaway (1969a, b) found that dropout males generally become downwardly mobile socioeconomically, but that females generally maintained the same socioeconomic status after dropping out as measured by occupation of their husbands.

How can one account for the discrepancies in these results? Bachman (1971) suggests one solution. He believes the national anti-dropout campaign to have been a self-fulfilling prophecy, especially in light of his finding that both dropouts and graduates find what they did in high school largely irrelevant to what they are currently doing. In addition, the employability of high school dropouts may well depend on economic conditions at a particular time and in a particular place. In times of low unemployment and economic prosperity, dropouts appear as likely to be employed as graduates; in times of high unemployment, they may be the first affected and the hardest hit.

CHAPTER III. METHODOLOGY

The purpose of the study was to examine the factors associated with attrition and participation in vocational programs. Previous studies have explored the impact of vocational preparation on dropouts and potential dropouts. The present study was a needs assessment of both vocational education and early school leaver populations.

Sample Selection

Subjects for the study were sampled from two populations, tenth grade vocational students and tenth grade early school leavers. Samples were taken from two Rhode Island communities, one urban and one suburban, and the participating communities were chosen on the basis of available vocational programs, accessibility, and willingness to participate in the study. Vocational students were sampled from current enrollment listings of tenth grade students in full time equivalency vocational programs. Early leavers were sampled from the Rhode Island Student Flow Survey. Early leavers, for the purposes of the present study, were those who were reported as having left the tenth grade during the 1977-78 school year. Both samples were selected by means of a table of random numbers.

In addition to the aforementioned samples, a group of early school leavers was chosen for interviewing. These subjects were not randomly sampled, but, rather, were selected from programs that served early leavers. They constituted a special segment of the early school leaver population in that they were voluntarily participating in educational and training programs. Therefore, results from the early leaver interviews cannot be considered representative of the larger population, and statistical analysis was not reported for this group.

Subjects

The sample of vocational students in the study was composed of 96 tenth graders, 47 males and 49 females. Ages were calculated as of June 30, 1978. Ages ranged from 15 to 18 years, with the majority being 16 years old (see Table 1). Mean age for males in the sample was 16.5, and for females, 16.3 (see Table 2). The majority of the vocational students were white (78.2%), with 9.4% black and 4.2% Hispanic (see Table 3).

Data on occupation of parents of vocational students are presented in Tables 4 and 5. Categories were derived from U.S. Census data. The majority of employed mothers worked in operative and clerical positions (29.7% and 26.6%, respectively). The next largest employed group worked in professional positions (15.6%). The largest number of employed fathers also worked in operative positions (31.5%), with the next largest group employed as crafters (20.6%). A sizeable percentage, 24.6% total, worked in professional and managerial positions.

The sample of early school leavers was composed of 114 people who had left 10th grade during the 1977-78 school year. Due to problems with data availability, demographic information was missing in five cases. Of the remaining 109 early leavers, 62 were male and 47 were female. Ages ranged from 15 to 19 years, with most of the early leavers being 16 years old (see Table 6). These distributions parallelled the state rate as reported in the Student Flow Survey (Rhode Island Department of Education, 1977). Statewide, the largest group of dropouts were 16 years old (46.5%), with 5.7% reported being under 16 years of age. Mean age for males in the early leaver sample was 16.9%, and for females, 17.0% (see Table 7). Race/ethnic group data and parental occupation data were not available for the sample.

TABLE 1

VOCATIONAL EDUCATION STUDENTS: SEX BY AGE

SEX	AGE				TOTAL
	15	16	17	18	
MALE					
Frequency	13	24	8	2	47
Percent	13.54	25.00	8.33	2.08	48.96
FEMALE					
Frequency	17	27	5	0	49
Percent	17.71	28.13	5.21	0	51.05
TOTAL	30	51	13	2	96
PERCENTAGE	31.25	53.13	13.54	2.08	100.00

TABLE 2

VOCATIONAL EDUCATION STUDENTS:
MEAN, RANGE AND STANDARD DEVIATION OF AGE

VARIABLE	N	MEAN	RANGE	SD
Age of Total Sample	96	16.38	15.53 - 18.61	0.60
Age of Males	47	16.50	15.56 - 18.61	0.67
Age of Females	49	16.27	15.53 - 17.55	0.50

TABLE 3

VOCATIONAL EDUCATION STUDENTS: RACIAL OR ETHNIC GROUP

RACE OR ETHNIC GROUP	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
White	76	78.23
Black	9	9.38
Hispanic	4	4.17
Cape Verdian	1	1.04
French	1	1.04
Portuguese	1	1.04
Mixed	4	4.17
TOTAL	96	100.00

TABLE 4

VOCATIONAL EDUCATION STUDENTS: MOTHERS' EMPLOYMENT

MOTHERS' EMPLOYMENT	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Professional	10	15.63
Managerial	3	4.69
Clerical	17	26.56
Sales	1	1.56
Crafter	4	6.25
Operative	19	29.69
Service	3	4.69
Homemaker	7	10.94
No occupation given	32	---

TABLE 5

VOCATIONAL EDUCATION STUDENTS BY FATHERS' EMPLOYMENT

FATHERS' EMPLOYMENT	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Professional	9	12.33
Managerial	9	12.33
Clerical	7	9.59
Sales	5	6.85
Crafter	15	20.55
Operative	23	31.51
Service	4	5.48
Laborer	1	1.37
No occupation given	23	---

TABLE 6

EARLY SCHOOL LEAVERS: SEX BY AGE

SEX	AGE					TOTAL
	15	16	17	18	19	
MALE						
Frequency	2	33	25	2	0	62
Percent	1.83	30.28	22.94	1.83	0	56.88
FEMALE						
Frequency	1	25	18	2	1	47
Percent	.92	22.94	16.51	1.83	.92	43.12
TOTAL	3	58	43	4	1	109*
PERCENTAGE	2.75	53.21	39.45	3.67	.92	100.00

N= 114
*Missing data= 5

TABLE 7

EARLY SCHOOL LEAVERS: MEAN, RANGE AND STANDARD DEVIATION OF AGE

VARIABLE	N*	MEAN	RANGE	SD
Age of Total Sample	109	16.96	15.81 - 19.33	.59
Age of Males	62	16.93	15.81 - 18.48	.55
Age of Females	47	17.00	15.99 - 19.33	.65

*Missing data= 5

Research Design

The study utilized several statistical techniques in analyzing the research questions. The data allowed simple techniques, such as t-tests for comparison of means, and chi-square and phi for contingency tables. Interview and questionnaire data were reported in frequencies and percentages. No attempt was made to identify causal relationships; rather, the study focused on identifying differences extant in the two groups. The outcome of the research design was a descriptive analysis of two samples, not a comparison or cause-effect identification.

Research Instruments

The data were collected by means of four instruments: an interview schedule for vocational students and early school leavers, a school attitude questionnaire, and a school personnel interview. The vocatioanl education early school leavers' interviews were based on Cervantes' (1965) and modified to account for the vocational emphasis of the study. The questionnaire was adapted from work by Glasheen, Hadley, and Schneider (1976). These instruments are described below. Data were also gathered from school records of both samples.

Vocational Student Interviews

The vocational student interview (Appendix A) contained three sections. Part One was concerned with school experiences, in particular what students liked and disliked about school. Students were asked if they had ever considered dropping out of school, why they considered it, and why they stayed in. There were several questions about the students' vocational programs. Part Two focused on peer group and relationships with friends. In the last

part of the questionnaire, students were asked whose advice they would seek if they needed help.

Early School Leaver Interviews

The interview for the early school leavers (Appendix B) also contained three parts but was somewhat longer than the vocational student interview. Part One dealt with school experiences. Questions focused on factors disliked and liked about school, factors associated with leaving school, and knowledge of and access to vocational training. Early leavers were also asked about what they had learned in school that was valuable to them after they left. Part Two of the interview examined factors related to family and friends. Early leavers were asked about parental reactions to their leaving school, school completed by friends, school programs of friends, and the people (students and staff) in school who were considered friends. In Part Three, participants were questioned in depth about leaving school. These questions included how they felt about their decision, who they talked to about leaving, plans they had at the time, and who they would consult for advice. The final question explored early leavers' current desire for vocational training.

School Attitude Questionnaire I and II

The School Attitude Questionnaire (SAQ) (Appendix C) included basic demographic information such as age, sex and parental occupation in Part One. Part Two focused on reactions to school of the subjects and their perceptions of their peers' reactions. In Part Three, participants were asked to identify their racial or ethnic group. Part Four contained two sections. The first dealt with the subjects' self concepts about their school work; the second part, with locus of control. SAQ I was

worded for people no longer in school, while SAQ II was phrased in the present tense. Otherwise, both SAQ I and SAQ II were identical.

School Personnel Interview

An interview schedule was designed for use with high school principals, vocational coordinators and guidance personnel (Appendix D). Questions dealt with the level of awareness about and involvement with early school leavers. Additional information was sought as to the image and function of vocational education. School personnel were also asked to indicate what they thought the role of vocational education should be in preventing dropouts.

School Records

Information collected from school records included the following items: California Achievement Test scores in reading and math; courses failed during the previous school year; cumulative grade averages and absentees for sixth, seventh, eighth, ninth, and tenth grades; and IQ scores (see Appendix E).

Other information was sought, but was not uniformly available from school records or school personnel. This included reading level, grades repeated, number of suspensions, and family background.

Procedures

Interviews and questionnaires were administered by three trained interviewers and the project director. Time required for administration of both instruments ranged from 15 to 45 minutes, with most sessions lasting 30 minutes. The interview was administered first and was pre-

ceded by a brief explanation of the study. The interview was tape-recorded to insure accurate reporting. The questionnaire was designed to be self-administering, with instructions preceding each section. Due to lack of reading ability, however, some students and early leavers were unable to complete the questionnaire without assistance. In these cases, the interviewer read the questionnaire to the subject and marked the answers given. Subjects were permitted to proceed at their own pace and to ask questions if necessary. At the end of the interview/questionnaire session, participants were given an opportunity to ask further questions about the study, to comment on additional subjects, and to make recommendations, if they wished to do so. A group of early leavers not included in the sample was chosen for interviewing. Interview/questionnaire procedures for this selected group were identical to those for the vocational students. The data from these interviews served illustrative purposes, and were not representative of the larger early leaver population.

Information from school records for both vocational students and the random sample of early leavers was collected using a predetermined coding sheet.

In order to assure confidentiality, subjects were assigned a code number. Names did not appear on any data collection forms. The master list linking subjects with their code numbers was destroyed when the project was completed. As an additional confidentiality measure, interviews were conducted before obtaining information from school records. This procedure insured a bias-free interview.

Interviews of school personnel were conducted by the project director. Administration time for these interviews ranged from 30 to 75 minutes. In some instances, interviews were conducted in small groups. This procedure was necessitated by scheduling problems.

Data Analysis

Interviews and questionnaires were coded by a predetermined numerical scheme and the data entered into the computer. Data from school records were entered into the computer directly from the data collection sheets. The data analysis included the use of t-tests, cross-tabulations and chi-square as described and programmed through the Statistical Analysis System -- SAS.

The following research questions were examined.

1. Are vocational education students more or less likely to leave school than their peers in comprehensive high school programs?
2. Are certain factors, such as attendance, grades, IQ, and test scores predictors of drop outs?
3. What factors contribute to the decision to enter vocational education programs?
4. What factors contribute to the decision to drop out of school?

Question 1 was to compare the rates of early school leavers in the participating vocational schools with those for the comprehensive high schools with which they were associated.

Question 2 was analyzed by means of t-tests between variables for both groups. In addition, chi-square was used to assess the relationship between some of the variables within each group.

Frequency counts and percentages were the methods employed for analyzing Question 3.

As previously noted, due to the unrepresentative nature of the dropout group, their interview data were not statistically analyzed. A narrative report of these interviews can be found in Chapter VII.

CHAPTER IV. RESULTS

The results of the testing of the research questions are reported in this chapter. Tables and figures are presented to clarify the data analysis. Data were insufficient for statistical analysis of the fourth research question.

Question 1

Are vocational education students more or less likely to leave school than their peers in comprehensive high school programs?

It was impossible to assess the holding power of vocational programs by comparing their dropout rates with those of their affiliated high schools, as was originally intended. This was due to a lack of data and to reporting methodology. The Vocational Education MIS reported students who failed to complete programs, but did not report students who left school. There was no information on vocational education early leavers that was comparable to Student Flow reporting. The only indication of the vocational dropout rate came from the schools themselves. Vocational facility coordinators generally felt their dropout rates to be lower than comprehensive high schools. Their perceptions of the dropout rate in the two schools are reported in the section on school personnel interviews.

Question 2

Are certain factors, such as attendance, grades, IQ, and test scores predictors of dropouts?

Analysis of Question 2 involved frequencies and percentages, t-tests, and chi-square analysis. Frequencies and mean results are

reported for each variable examined. Chi-square was used to analyze relationships between variables for each sample.

School Attendance

Absentee rates were obtained from school records of vocational students and early leavers. Data for sixth and tenth grade absentees were incomplete, so these years were not included in the analysis. Vocational students had a relatively low rate of absences, as noted from Table 8, while the rate for early leavers was much higher. One striking difference is illustrated in Figure 1. Not only were vocational students more likely to be present, but their attendance remained more constant over time. Early leavers, on the other hand, had more absences initially in the seventh grade, and their absences increased greatly, especially in the ninth grade.

Table 9 presents t-test results for absences of the two groups. Differences in absence rates were significant ($p \leq .0001$) for all grades analyzed.

Standard deviations for absences were consistently greater for early leavers, but coefficients of variation ($V = \frac{S}{\bar{X}}$) indicated that variation in means of the two groups was not as great as it initially appeared.

Grade Averages

Grade averages in sixth, seventh, eighth, ninth, and tenth grades were computed for both samples using the formula: A=4.0; B=3.0; C=2.0; D=1.0; and F=0. Data for sixth and tenth grades were incomplete and thus were not analyzed. Vocational students tended to have better grade averages than early leavers (see Table 10). In the ninth grade, 46.9% of vocational students had grades between B and C, while the grades for the

FIGURE 1

MEAN ABSENCES OF VOCATIONAL STUDENTS AND EARLY SCHOOL LEAVERS IN GRADES 7, 8, AND 9

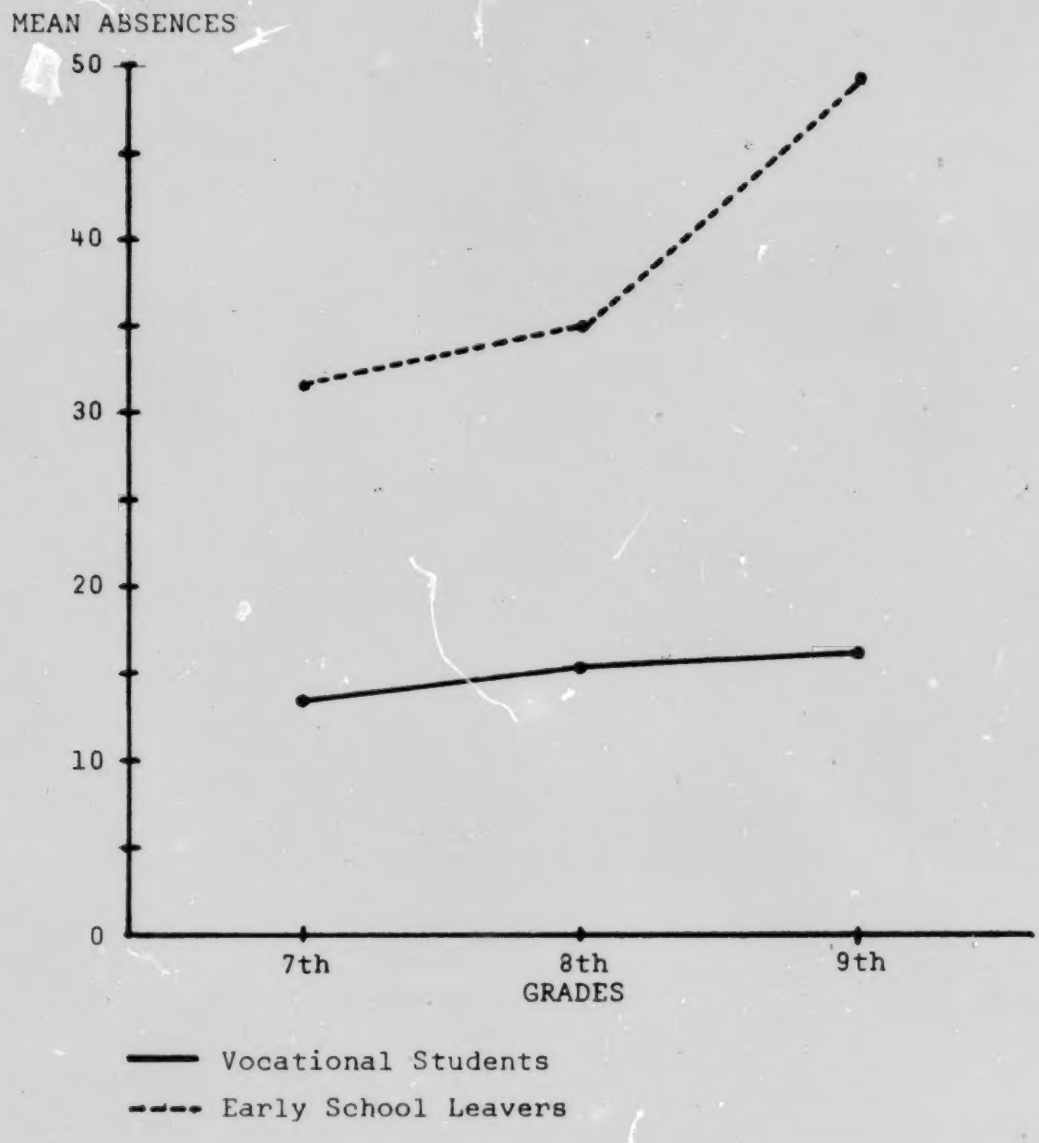


TABLE 8

NUMBER OF ABSENCES FOR VOCATIONAL STUDENTS AND EARLY SCHOOL LEAVERS - GRADES 7, 8 AND 9

	VOCATIONAL STUDENTS *		EARLY SCHOOL LEAVERS **	
GRADE AVERAGES	FREQUENCY	% OF TOTAL	FREQUENCY	% OF TOTAL
	GRADE 7			
0 - 15 Days	53	55.2	27	23.7
16 - 30 Days	15	15.6	32	28.1
31 - 45 Days	4	4.2	9	7.9
46 - 60 Days	2	2.1	6	5.3
61 or More Days	2	2.1	14	12.3
Missing Data	20	--	26	--
	GRADE 8			
0 - 15 Days	46	47.9	27	23.7
16 - 30 Days	22	22.9	26	22.8
31 - 45 Days	2	2.1	16	14.0
46 - 60 Days	6	6.3	10	8.8
61 or More Days	0	0	15	13.2
Missing Data	20	--	20	--
	GRADE 9			
0 - 15 Days	51	53.1	15	13.2
16 - 30 Days	23	24.0	19	16.7
31 - 45 Days	9	9.4	19	16.7
46 - 60 Days	0	0	12	10.5
61 or More Days	2	2.1	33	28.9
Missing Data	11	--	16	--

*N= 96
**N= 114

TABLE 9

T-TEST FOR ABSENCES, GRADES 7, 8 AND 9
OF VOCATIONAL STUDENTS AND EARLY SCHOOL LEAVERS

ABSENCES - GRADE 7	Mean	SD	Std. Error	Coefficient of Variation
Vocational Students	13.55	14.94	1.71	1.1026
Early School Leavers	31.95	29.53	3.15	.9241
Variance	t=5.1342*			
ABSENCES - GRADE 8	**Mean**	**SD**	**Std. Error**	**Coefficient of Variation**
Vocational Students	15.21	13.36	1.53	.8787
Early School Leavers	35.00	31.85	3.29	.9101
Variance	t=5.4585*			
ABSENCES - GRADE 9	**Mean**	**SD**	**Std. Error**	**Coefficient of Variation**
Vocational Students	16.20	13.40	1.45	.8269
Early School Leavers	49.56	35.28	3.56	.7119
Variance	t=8.6681*			

* $p \leq .0001$

TABLE 10

GRADE AVERAGES FOR VOCATIONAL STUDENTS AND EARLY SCHOOL LEAVERS - GRADES 7, 8 AND 9

	VOCATIONAL STUDENTS *		EARLY SCHOOL LEAVERS **	
GRADE AVERAGES	FREQUENCY	% OF TOTAL	FREQUENCY	% OF TOTAL
	GRADE 7			
0 - 1.0	1	1.0	10	8.8
1.1 - 2.0	8	8.3	36	31.6
2.1 - 3.0	49	51.0	38	33.3
3.1 - 4.0	19	19.8	6	5.3
Missing Data	19		24	
	GRADE 8			
0 - 1.0	3	3.1	19	16.7
1.1 - 2.0	19	19.8	38	33.3
2.1 - 3.0	39	40.6	39	34.2
3.1 - 4.0	24	25.0	3	2.6
Missing Data	16	--	15	--
	GRADE 9			
0 - 1.0	10	10.4	63	55.3
1.1 - 2.0	30	31.2	29	25.4
2.1 - 3.0	45	46.9	16	14.0
3.1 - 4.0	6	6.3	0	0
Missing Data	5	--	6	--

*N= 96
**N= 114

majority of the early leavers were below D (55.3%). It is interesting to note that both groups experienced a rather sharp decline in grade averages during the ninth grade (see Figure 2), although grade averages for vocational students remained higher than those of early leavers.

Analysis by t-test is reported in Table 11. Significant differences in grades between groups were noted for seventh, eighth, and ninth grades ($p \leq .0001$). Standard deviations and coefficients of variation were consistently greater for early leavers, indicating more variation in their grade averages.

With respect to grade averages, it is interesting to note the number and type of courses failed by the two groups during the last completed school year. Most vocational students (55.2%) received passing grades for all course work, while 30.7% of early leavers failed six or more courses (see Table 12). As illustrated in Table 13, more vocational students failed gym than failed any academic subject (24.0%). Early leavers failed English and math (64.9% and 57.0%, respectively) more often than other subjects, but failures were high in almost all academic areas. It should be noted that three vocational students (3.1%) failed pre-vocational courses, but 13.2% of the early leavers failed vocational courses.

Intelligence

IQ scores obtained from school records were analyzed by means of frequencies, percentages and t-test. In the sample of early leavers, 42.1% had IQ scores of 89 or below, with the largest percentage (29.0%) with scores between 75 and 89 (see Table 14). The majority of vocational students (50.5%) scored between 90 and 110, with 10.7% scoring above 110.

FIGURE 2

GRADE AVERAGES OF VOCATIONAL STUDENTS AND EARLY SCHOOL LEAVERS IN GRADES 7, 8, AND 9

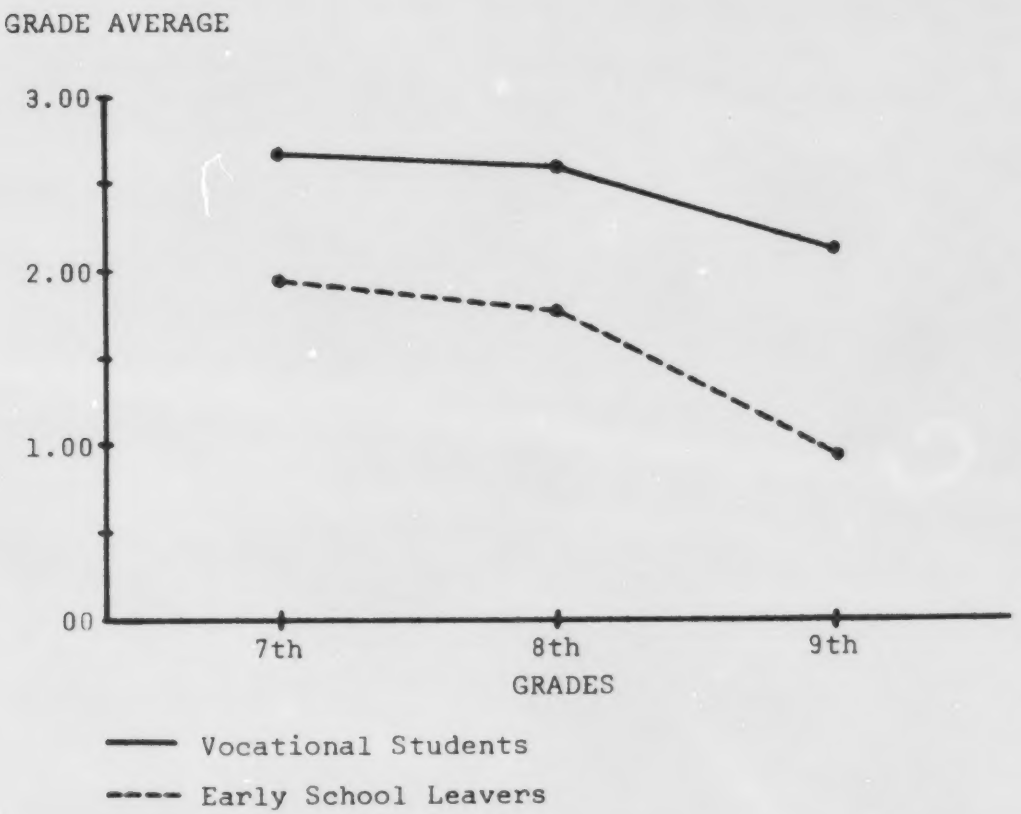


TABLE 11

T-TEST FOR GRADE AVERAGES, GRADES 7, 8 AND 9
FOR VOCATIONAL STUDENTS AND EARLY SCHOOL LEAVERS

Grade Averages - Grade 7	Mean	SD	Std. Error	Coefficient of Variance
Vocational Students	2.68	.59	.068	.0221
Early School Leavers	1.97	.72	.075	.0364
Variance	t=-.6885*			
Grade Averages - Grade 8	**Mean**	**SD**	**Std. Error**	**Coefficient of Variance**
Vocational Students	2.60	.70	.077	.0265
Early School Leavers	1.77	.76	.076	.0427
Variance	t=-.7529*			
Grade Averages - Grade 9	**Mean**	**SD**	**Std. Error**	**Coefficient of Variance**
Vocational Students	2.13	.77	.081	.0361
Early School Leavers	.96	.88	.085	.0916
Variance	t=-.9841*			

* $p \leq .0001$

TABLE 12

NUMBER OF COURSES FAILED IN LAST GRADE COMPLETED
BY VOCATIONAL STUDENTS AND EARLY SCHOOL LEAVERS

	VOCATIONAL*		EARLY SCHOOL LEAVERS **	
	FREQUENCY	%	FREQUENCY	%
None	53	55.2	10	8.8
1	18	18.8	10	8.8
2	10	10.4	11	9.6
3	9	9.4	10	8.8
4	1	1.0	17	14.9
5	0	0.0	15	13.2
6 or More	0	0.0	35	30.7

* Missing Data= 5; N=96
** Missing Data= 6; N=114

TABLE 13

TYPES OF COURSES FAILED IN LAST GRADE COMPLETED
BY VOCATIONAL STUDENTS AND EARLY SCHOOL LEAVERS

	VOCATIONAL *		EARLY SCHOOL LEAVERS **	
None	53	55.2	10	8.8
English	2	2.1	74	64.9
Math	12	12.5	65	57.0
Science	13	13.5	57	50.0
Social Studies	6	6.3	57	50.0
Gym	23	24.0	62	54.4
Pre-Vocational	3	3.1	16	14.0
Foreign Language	7	7.3	8	7.0
Vocational Ed.	0	0.0	15	13.2
Other	2	2.1	60	52.6

* Missing Data=5; N=96
**Missing Data=6; N=114

TABLE 14

IQ OF VOCATIONAL STUDENTS AND EARLY SCHOOL LEAVERS

	VOCATIONAL *		EARLY SCHOOL LEAVERS **	
IQ	FREQUENCY	% OF TOTAL	FREQUENCY	% OF TOTAL
Below 75	6	6.5	15	13.1
75 - 89	16	17.2	33	29.0
90 - 110	47	50.5	30	26.3
111 - 125	10	10.7	6	5.3
Above 125	0	0	1	.9
Missing Data	17	--	29	--

*N= 96
**N= 114

TABLE 15

T-TEST OF IQ SCORES OF VOCATIONAL STUDENTS AND EARLY SCHOOL LEAVERS

	Mean	SD	Std. Error
Vocational	95.15	12.98	1.460
Early School Leavers	89.34	14.84	1.610
Variance	t=-2.6604*		

* $p \leq .01$

Analysis by t-test revealed significant differences between the two samples (see Table 15). Mean IQ score for vocational students was 95.15, and for early leavers 89.34 ($p < .01$).

Caution should be observed in the statistical use of IQ tests. The concept of measuring IQ has been the center of controversy for several years (Jensen, 1969 and Hernstein, 1973). IQ measures were used in the present study as a means of identifying differences between two groups, not for purposes of pinpointing absolute intelligence levels. The reader should exercise caution in drawing conclusions on the basis of these IQ scores.

California Achievement Test -- Reading and Math

Scores from the California Achievement Test (CAT) in reading and math were reported for each of the two school districts in the study. Vocational students scored consistently higher on national norms than did early leavers (see Tables 16 and 17). On the reading section of the CAT, 35.4% of vocational students were at or below the 25th percentile, compared to 51.8% of the early leavers. Results were similar for math scores. Compared to national norms, neither group scored high, with the majority of both samples scoring below the 50th percentile on both reading and math.

When differences between the groups were examined, they were found to be statistically significant ($p \leq .0001$) (see Table 18). Mean percentile for vocational students was 40.05 on reading and 42.43 on math. Early leavers' mean percentile was much lower, 25.02 on reading and 24.04 on math. Figure 3 illustrates these differences.

It should be noted that the early leaver group had considerable missing data. Test scores were not available in some cases, and in others, they were not current. This problem can be partially explained by the high absence

TABLE 16

CALIFORNIA ACHIEVEMENT TEST (CAT) -- READING

	VOCATIONAL *		EARLY SCHOOL LEAVERS **	
PERCENTILE	FREQUENCY	%	FREQUENCY	%
0 - 25	34	35.41	59	51.75
26 - 50	22	22.92	13	11.40
51 - 75	28	29.17	12	10.53
76 - 99	8	8.33	3	2.63

* Missing Data= 4; N= 96
**Missing Data=27; N= 114

TABLE 17

CALIFORNIA ACHIEVEMENT TEST (CAT) -- MATH

	VOCATIONAL *		EARLY SCHOOL LEAVERS **	
PERCENTILE	FREQUENCY	%	FREQUENCY	%
0 - 25	20	20.83	59	51.75
26 - 50	38	39.58	19	16.67
51 - 75	22	22.92	6	5.26
76 - 99	9	9.37	5	4.39

* Missing Data= 7; N= 96
**Missing Data=25; N= 114

TABLE 18

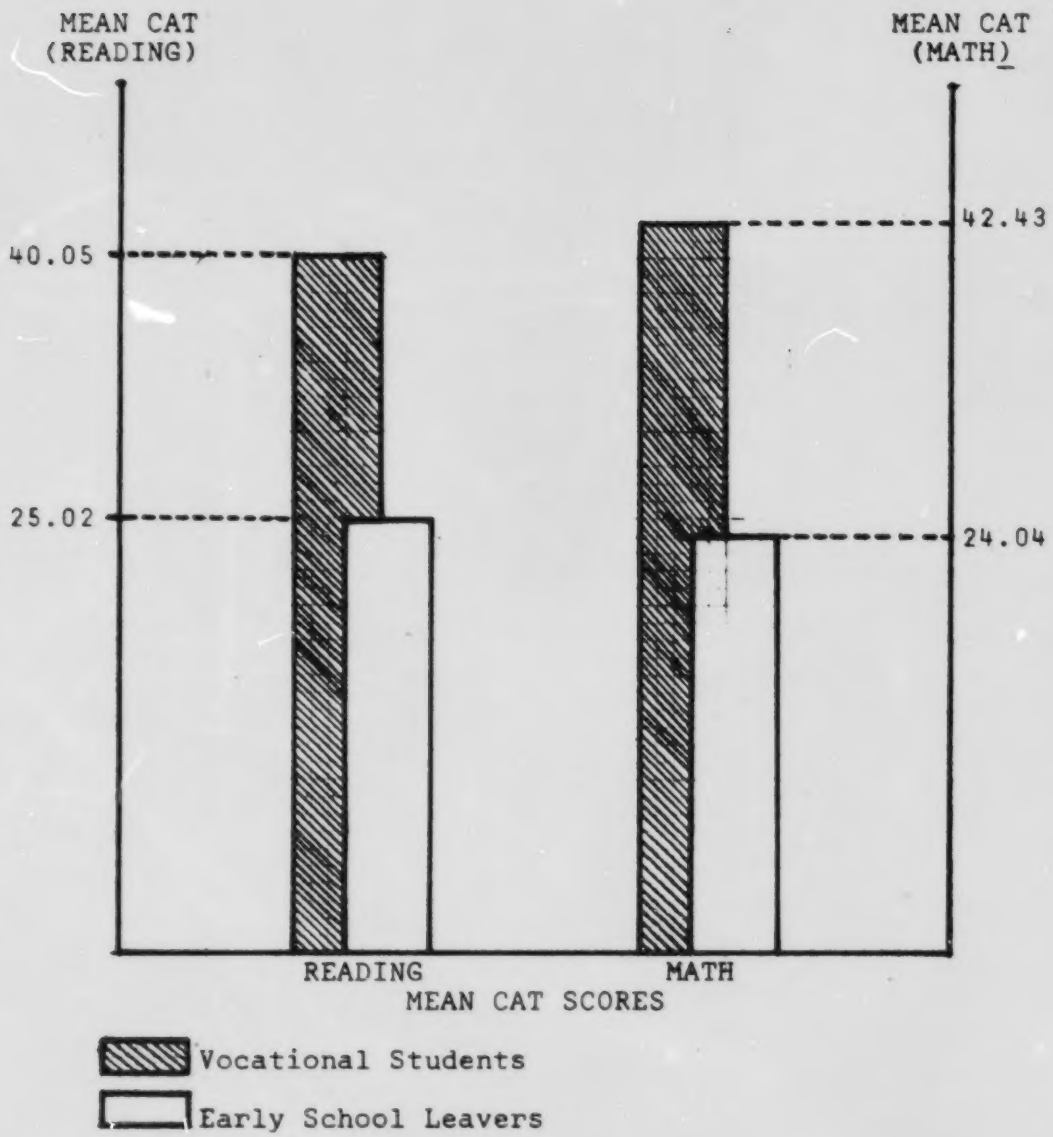
T-TEST OF CALIFORNIA ACHIEVEMENT TEST (CAT) -- READING AND MATH FOR VOCATIONAL STUDENTS AND EARLY SCHOOL LEAVERS

READING	Mean	SD	Std. Error
Vocational	40.05	25.18	2.625
Early School Leavers	25.02	23.03	2.469
Variance	t=-4.161*		
MATH	**Mean**	**SD**	**Std. Error**
Vocational	42.43	23.66	2.508
Early School Leavers	24.04	22.15	2.348
Variance	t=-5.351*		

* $p \leq .0001$

FIGURE 3

CALIFORNIA ACHIEVEMENT TEST (CAT): MEAN SCORES IN READING AND MATH FOR VOCATIONAL STUDENTS AND EARLY SCHOOL LEAVERS



rates for the sample of early leavers.

Vocational Students - Grades by Absences

Chi-square analysis of the relationship between grade averages and absences revealed the following information. The two factors were highly related for seventh grade ($p \leq .0001$) and somewhat related for ninth grade ($p \leq .05$) (see Table 19). There was no significant relationship between grade averages and absences in the eighth grade. The strength of these various relationships was assessed by the formula for phi: $\emptyset = \frac{\chi^2}{N}$. Seventh grade variables were almost perfectly related with $\emptyset = 0.914$. The strength of the relationship in ninth grade was $\emptyset = 0.485$, indicating slight relationship. The decline in the strength of the relationship from seventh to ninth grade can probably be attributed to factors such as students changing schools and making the transition to high school. It should be noted that there were more missing data for seventh and eighth grades than for ninth grade.

Early School Leavers -- Grades by Absences

Early leavers' grade averages were significantly related to their attendance in seventh, eighth and ninth grades, as tested by chi-square (see Table 20). The relationship during seventh and ninth grades was highly significant ($p \leq .0001$), and significant for eighth grade ($p \leq .01$). Assessment of the strength of these relationships by phi indicated that the most perfect relationship occurred with data for seventh grade ($\emptyset = 0.707$). Phi scores for eighth and ninth grades were 0.526 and 0.668, respectively. Although the relationships remained significant over the three grades, the strength of the relationship declined. Again, this may have been a result of transition to high school and related factors.

TABLE 19

CHI-SQUARE ANALYSIS OF GRADE AVERAGES
AND ABSENCES OF VOCATIONAL STUDENTS

GRADE 7

GRADE AVERAGES	ABSENCES					TOTAL
	0 - 15	16 - 30	31 - 45	46 - 60	over 60	
0 - 1.0						
Frequency	0	0	0	1	0	1
Percent	0	0	0	1.32	0	1.32
1.1 - 2.0						
Frequency	3	3	0	0	2	8
Percent	3.95	3.95	0	0	2.63	10.53
2.1 - 3.0						
Frequency	38	8	1	1	0	48
Percent	50.00	10.53	1.32	1.32	0	63.16
3.1 - 4.0						
Frequency	12	4	3	0	0	19
Percent	15.79	5.26	3.95	0	0	25.00
TOTAL	53	15	4	2	2	76
PERCENTAGE	69.74	19.74	5.26	2.63	2.63	100.00

Missing Cases= 20

Chi-square= 63.529*
Phi= 0.914

* $p \leq .0001$

TABLE 19

CHI-SQUARE ANALYSIS OF GRADE AVERAGES
AND ABSENCES OF VOCATIONAL STUDENTS
(Continued)

GRADE 8

GRADE AVERAGES	ABSENCES					TOTAL
	0 - 15	16 - 30	31 - 45	46 - 60	over 60	
0 - 1.0						
Frequency	1	0	0	0	0	1
Percent	1.32	0	0	0	0	1.32
1.1 - 2.0						
Frequency	5	6	1	3	0	15
Percent	6.58	7.89	1.32	3.95	0	19.74
2.1 - 3.0						
Frequency	21	12	1	3	0	37
Percent	27.63	15.79	1.32	3.95	0	48.68
3.1 - 4.0						
Frequency	19	4	0	0	0	23
Percent	25.00	5.26	0	0	0	30.26
TOTAL	46	22	2	6	0	76
PERCENTAGE	60.53	28.95	2.63	7.89	0	100.00

Missing Cases= 20

Chi-square= 12.410
Phi= 0.404

TABLE 19

CHI-SQUARE ANALYSIS OF GRADE AVERAGES
AND ABSENCES OF VOCATIONAL STUDENTS
(Continued)

GRADE 9

GRADE AVERAGES	ABSENCES					TOTAL
	0 - 15	16 - 30	31 - 45	46 - 60	over 60	
0 - 1.0						
Frequency	2	3	3	0	1	9
Percent	2.35	3.53	3.53	0	1.18	10.59
1.1 - 2.0						
Frequency	12	9	5	0	1	27
Percent	14.12	10.59	5.88	0	1.18	31.76
2.1 - 3.0						
Frequency	32	10	1	0	0	43
Percent	37.65	11.76	1.18	0	0	50.59
3.1 - 4.0						
Frequency	5	1	0	0	0	6
Percent	5.88	1.18	0	0	0	7.06
TOTAL	51	23	9	0	2	85
PERCENTAGE	60.00	27.06	10.59	0	2.35	100.00

Missing Cases= 11

Chi-square= 12.962**
Phi= 0.485

** $p \leq .05$

TABLE 20

CHI-SQUARE ANALYSIS OF GRADE AVERAGES
AND ABSENCES OF EARLY SCHOOL LEAVERS

GRADE 7

GRADE AVERAGES	ABSENCES					TOTAL
	0 - 15	15 - 30	31 - 45	46 - 60	over 60	
0 - 1.0						
Frequency	1	0	1	4	4	10
Percent	1.14	0	1.14	4.55	4.55	11.36
1.1 - 2.0						
Frequency	8	17	2	1	7	35
Percent	9.09	19.32	2.27	1.14	7.95	39.77
2.1 - 3.0						
Frequency	13	15	6	1	3	38
Percent	14.77	17.05	6.82	1.14	3.41	43.18
3.1 - 4.0						
Frequency	5	0	0	0	0	5
Percent	5.68	0	0	0	0	5.68
TOTAL	27	32	9	6	14	88
PERCENTAGE	30.68	36.36	10.23	6.82	15.91	100.00

Missing Cases= 26

Chi-square= 44.043*
Phi= 0.707

*$p \leq .0001$

TABLE 20

CHI-SQUARE ANALYSIS OF GRADE AVERAGES
AND ABSENCES OF EARLY SCHOOL LEAVERS
(Continued)

GRADE 8

GRADE AVERAGES	ABSENCES					TOTAL
	0 - 15	16 - 30	31 - 45	46 - 60	over 60	
0 - 1.0						
Frequency	2	3	3	3	7	18
Percent	2.13	3.19	3.19	3.19	7.45	19.15
1.1 - 2.0						
Frequency	8	8	9	4	8	37
Percent	8.51	8.51	9.57	4.26	8.51	39.36
2.1 - 3.0						
Frequency	16	13	4	3	0	36
Percent	17.02	13.83	4.26	3.19	0	38.30
3.1 - 4.0						
Frequency	1	2	0	0	0	3
Percent	1.06	2.13	0	0	0	3.19
TOTAL	27	26	16	10	15	94
PERCENTAGE	28.72	27.66	17.02	10.64	15.96	100.00

Missing Cases= 20

Chi-square= 25.991**
Phi= 0.526

** $p \leq .01$

TABLE 20

CHI-SQUARE ANALYSIS OF GRADE AVERAGES
AND ABSENCES OF EARLY SCHOOL LEAVERS
(Continued)

GRADE 9						
GRADE AVERAGES	ABSENCES					TOTAL
	0 - 15	16 - 30	31 - 45	46 - 60	over 60	
0 - 1.0 Frequency	2	8	8	9	31	58
Percent	2.04	8.16	8.16	9.18	31.63	59.18
1.1 - 2.0 Frequency	6	7	9	3	2	27
Percent	6.12	7.14	9.18	3.06	2.04	27.55
2.1 - 3.0 Frequency	7	4	2	0	0	13
Percent	7.14	4.08	2.04	0	0	13.27
3.1 - 4.0 Frequency	0	0	0	0	0	0
Percent	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	15	19	19	12	33	98
PERCENTAGE	15.31	19.39	19.39	12.24	33.67	100.00

Missing Cases= 16

Chi-square= 43.712*
Phi= 0.668

* $p \leq .0001$

Question 3

What factors contribute to the decision to enter vocational education programs?

Interview data were used in answering Question 3. Results are reported in frequencies and percentages.

When asked what they liked in particular about school, vocational students responded overwhelmingly that it was their vocational program (see Table 21). This was mentioned by 51.0 % of the students, often in conjunction with learning, which was the second most often stated factor liked about school (41.6%). The social aspect of school, seeing friends, was mentioned by 26.0% of the students, and 15.6% said they just liked school.

A further indication of vocational students' feelings about school was obtained by asking what they disliked about school. Most of the students (45.8%) said there was nothing they disliked about school (see Table 22). However, 25.0% of the students stated they just disliked school in general, and 21.9% did not like the teachers. Getting up early was a problem for 11.5% of the students, primarily those from sending communities.

The vocational students appeared to be goal-oriented and motivated in terms of future careers. When asked why they picked their current vocational program, 40.6% said it fit into their future plans (see Table 23). Other reasons given were that they liked the program (32.3%), and that they took vocational courses because of recommendations of family members (14.6%). A few students (6.3%) mentioned that they were in vocational programs that were their second or third choices.

TABLE 21

VOCATIONAL STUDENTS' RESPONSES TO:

WHAT DO YOU LIKE IN PARTICULAR ABOUT GOING TO SCHOOL?

	NUMBER OF RESPONSES *	PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL STUDENTS INTERVIEWED **
Vocational	49	51.0
Learning	40	41.6
Seeing Friends	25	26.0
Just Likes School	15	15.6
Not Much	8	8.3
Sports	6	6.3
Something To Do/ Keep Busy	6	6.3
Teachers	5	5.2

*More than one response per student possible.
**N= 96

TABLE 22

VOCATIONAL STUDENTS' RESPONSES TO:

IS THERE ANYTHING IS PARTICULAR THAT YOU DISLIKE ABOUT GOING TO SCHOOL?

	NUMBER OF RESPONSES *	PERCENTAGES OF TOTAL STUDENTS INTERVIEWED **
Nothing	44	45.8
School in General/ School Factors	24	25.0
Teachers	21	21.9
Getting Up Early	11	11.5
Work/Homework	9	9.4
Academic Courses	4	4.2
Certain Classes	4	4.2
Some Students	3	3.1
Tests	3	3.1
Vocational	1	1.0

*More than one response per student possible.
**N= 96

TABLE 23

REASON FOR CHOOSING CURRENT VOCATIONAL PROGRAM

REASONS	NUMBER OF RESPONSES	PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL STUDENTS INTERVIEWED**
Fits Future Plans	39	40.6
Likes Program	31	32.3
Family Suggested	14	14.6
Second Choice	6	6.3
Guidance	4	4.2
Just Wanted It	4	4.2
Best Program	3	3.1
Open House	2	2.1
Not Sure	1	1.0

* More than one answer per student possible.
**N= 96

Thirty of the vocational students had, at one time or another, considered dropping out of school. Most of them (33.3%) gave failing grades as the main reason for wanting to leave school (see Table 24). The second most often mentioned reason was to get a job and make money (20.0%). Of this group who considered leaving school, 40.0% decided to finish school in order to get a good job (see Table 25). Parents influenced 36.7% to remain in school.

TABLE 24

VOCATIONAL STUDENTS' RESPONSES TO:

IF YOU HAVE THOUGHT SERIOUSLY ABOUT DROPPING OUT OF SCHOOL, WHAT REASON WOULD YOU HAVE RANKED FIRST IF YOU HAD DECIDED TO DROP OUT?

	NUMBER OF RESPONSES *	PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL STUDENTS ANSWERING **
Failing or Making Bad Grades	10	33.3
Get a Job; Make Money	6	20.0
Aggravated With Treatment from Teachers/Administrators	5	16.7
Disliked School	5	16.7
Family or Personal Problems	4	13.3
Got Nothing Out of School	3	10.0
School Too Hard	1	3.3

*More than one response per student possible.
**N= 30

TABLE 25

REASONS GIVEN FOR STAYING IN SCHOOL BY VOCATIONAL STUDENTS WHO CONSIDERED DROPPING OUT

REASONS	NUMBER OF RESPONSES	PERCENTAGE*
Finish School to Get a Good Job	12	40.0
Parents	11	36.7
Teachers or Guidance Counselors	2	6.7
Friends	1	3.3
Other	4	13.3

*N= 30

CHAPTER V. VOCATIONAL EDUCATION CASE STUDIES

In order to present a total picture of typical vocational students, case studies were prepared on two students considered to be representative of students in the two vocational facilities. Individual information from the interviews, questionnaires, and school records was used as the basis of these case studies. They are not meant to be statistical representations; rather, these case studies are in-depth examinations of two vocational students presented in narrative form. Since complete sets of data were not available for the early leavers, case studies were not prepared for this group.

Case Study: Suburban Vocational Student

The first student was a white female, sixteen years old, enrolled in a vocational facility in a suburban community. She had an IQ of 94 and according to her standardized test scores, was performing about average in both reading and math. In grade 10.2, she scored at the 57th percentile in reading and at the 45th percentile in math. Her school grades had been consistently good, and her average for the year for seventh, eighth, and ninth grades ranged between 3.2 and 3.4. She was reading at her current grade level. She was seldom absent in the seventh and eighth grades, but in the ninth grade, the number of days she was absent rose to 27.

This student lived with both parents. Her mother was not currently employed but in the past had been a bookkepper. This student wanted to be a secretary, but was also taking bookkeeping and accounting. She probably would not mind doing what her mother did. Her father was an electrician.

She reported that she felt all right about school and had few problems. Her best friends and most of the kids in her neighborhood felt that way, too. She perceived that the largest group in the school she attended did not get along as well in school as she and her friends did, but the majority of students in the vocational school felt better on the whole about school than she did. For the most part, she disagreed that luck and chance determine success, but she disagreed only mildly.

She felt that she could do better in school than most of her friends and had the feeling (but was not sure) that her parents thought so too. Her parents asked her how she was doing in school only occasionally, and she rated her own work as fair.

This student said that she had about five close friends at school. Most of these friends were in business programs and would go to secretarial school for two years after high school. She also felt that she was friendly with three teachers at school and would talk to her vocational teacher about a decision she had to make. She would most likely talk to her best friend about it first, however.

She was currently in the intensive office lab program which was the thing she liked most about going to school. She said that it helped her to get a good idea about her field and gave her practical experience in skills she will need on the job after high school. She liked the work in vocational education, and also enjoyed seeing friends in school. She could not think of anything she disliked about school and had never thought of dropping out. If her best friend wanted to drop out, what she would tell him or her would depend on the situation. If he or she had a good job, dropping out might be all right. Otherwise, she felt one should stay in school.

She learned about the vocational program from guidance counselors in the ninth grade and picked the vocational program because she felt that it offered a better opportunity to get training than did a comprehensive high school. She expected to be a better typist and secretary because of the program.

Case Study: Urban Vocational Student

The second student was a black male just short of his seventeenth birthday, enrolled in an urban vocational school. His IQ according to his school records was 97. He performed below average, however, on standardized test, scoring in the 17th percentile in reading and in the 32nd percentile in math in grade 8.8. His grades in school had dropped steadily since the sixth grade, when he accumulated an average for the year slightly below a B. In the seventh and eighth grades, he dropped below a C average, and in the ninth grade, below a D average. Last year he was in the tenth grade. He failed math, science, social science, and finished the year with a 0.2 average. He was repeating the tenth grade.

The number of days that this student had been absent had steadily risen as his grades went down. In the sixth grade, he was present every day, and in the seventh and eighth grades, he was absent fewer than ten days each year. In ninth grade, however, his absences shot up to 62 for the year, and last year he was not in school 107 days. He was the youngest of seven children. His mother was not employed; his father was retired on social security. He said he felt all right about school and perceived his best friends, the majority of kids in his neighborhood, and most of the vocational student he knew to feel the same way. He said that the largest group in the school he attended only tolerated school and had problems sometimes. He rated his own abilities better than those of

his friends and thought his school work was good. According to this student, his parents were interested in his work, asked about it very often, and felt strongly that he could do better than his friends. He disagreed either mildly or strongly with statements attributing success to luck or chance, and showed a strong sense of internal control.

This student said that he had five to ten close friends in school. Most were in the business program, and he believed that most would graduate from high school. He was fairly friendly with about ten teachers, and felt friendly enough to talk to his drafting and outreach teachers if he needed help to make a decision. He would talk first to family members, however, especially to his brothers and his father. He did not really like school but realized that he needed the education. The atmosphere of the school bothered him, and he reported disliking institutional education in general. He did enjoy the drafting program. He was in that program because he wanted to be an architect and expected the program to help him in his career ambitions. He learned about it when guidance counselors from the vocational school visited the high school where he was enrolled two years ago.

He had seriously considered dropping out. He felt that he was gaining nothing from school. He said that several people influenced him not to leave by convincing him that it was best to stay in school in order to get a good job. If a friend were going to drop out, he would tell the friend to keep going to school. He believed that one needs a diploma to advance in life.

CHAPTER VI. SCHOOL PERSONNEL INTERVIEWS

The Dropout Problem

The majority of the high school counselors and principals indicated that the potential dropouts are already disposed to leave school by the time they reach high school. They cited school failure and home problems as two of the major reasons students leave school. By the time students reach tenth grade -- the year that most who will enter the vocational program do so -- they will already have decided whether they will remain in school. Their decision is often manifested in their absence patterns in junior high school. A large number of counselors see early school leavers as a product of their family environment and are not optimistic about what can be done for them. If a potential dropout comes to one of these counselors and administrators, these school personnel interviewed would all find out why the student wanted to leave, and would make some effort to keep the student in school. They often mentioned the need to keep the school environment flexible and to encourage teachers to find new ways to motivate the student as an individual. Frequently, counselors, especially vocational counselors, blamed the rigidity and irrelevance of academic courses for discouraging the potential dropout.

The administrators and counselors indicated that the dropout rate at their schools was higher than they would like it to be, but many also seemed to agree implicitly with the director of guidance at one of the high schools who stated flatly that the dropout problem is unsolvable. Vocational school personnel, however, seemed a bit more optimistic about the chances of keeping the prospective early leaver in school -- chiefly because they felt that they had a program that would motivate many who might otherwise leave. Both vocational facilities also took pride in having a lower dropout rate

than academic schools in similar communities. The urban facility reported a 12%-14% dropout rate, and the suburban facility reported a rate of less than 2%.

The Role of Vocational Education

The most enthusiastic proponents of vocational education were, naturally, the vocational coordinators and counselors. They saw vocational education as providing students with saleable skills and giving them a chance to succeed in a non-academic area. The vocational program, they felt, motivates students by giving them positive school experiences and an opportunity to learn skills that they want to learn. It appeals principally to those who are motivated to learn but disenchanted academically.

Administrators of the host schools of the two vocational facilities also spoke highly of vocational education. They saw it as an integral part of a high school's offerings, and some expressed the hope that vocational counselors might work more closely with the academic portion of the high school to coordinate the two programs. Several praised the expertise of vocational teachers, whose certification standards are stricter than those of academic teachers and who have had several years of work experience in their area. These administrators also mentioned the need for more community support for the vocational program, both in terms of dollars and interest.

The reactions of counselors and principals of non-host high schools to vocational education was mixed, occasionally negative. Six individuals from non-host schools were interviewed. Three spoke glowingly of their affiliated vocational facility as the "finest facility and program in the state", "a good option", that played a "very important role" in education.

Two saw vocational education as a mixed blessing, however. The program frequently motivates students, but requires them to make career decisions too early. Basic skills such as reading and writing are often neglected, they complained, in favor of more specialized vocational skills. One administrator feared that vocational education is training people in skills that will be outmoded in 20 years, and admitted that he believed that communities had "gone overboard with vocational education". One individual interviewed did not know much about vocational education.

Vocational Education and Dropout Prevention

On the whole, administrators and counselors felt that vocational programs probably appeal to the potential dropout, but that keeping the dropout in school is not, and ought not to be, their main purpose. The vocational administrators and counselors and those of the host high schools also had the strongest feelings on this question. Although there was some fear that vocational education is becoming too elitist, eliminating many students it might serve because of the initial competition to get into the program, there was also fear that vocational education might again become a "dumping ground" for the problem student. Sending a student to a vocational education program because he was a potential dropout would "lower standards". These people were emphatic about not labelling vocational education as the last resort.

These administrators also saw the vocational philosophy of education as intrinsically successful. In relating skills to real life situations, vocational education motivates students to do things they already want to do. The notion that "kids should be able to apply what they learn," these administrators believe, must be taken to heart by all segments of the school system, not just by vocational educators, to reduce dropouts.

Again, personnel from non-host schools differed somewhat from host and vocational administrators on the question. Most felt strongly that the potential dropout never gets near the vocational program. They insisted that vocational education screens out the potential dropout because of its competitive nature. These administrators saw vocational education as doing exactly what it claims -- preparing the student for a vocation. It has nothing to do with preventing dropping out. The reason this particular group felt so strongly about this question may have come from the head of guidance at one of the sending schools. She explained that out of the twenty or so from her school that are accepted at the vocational school each year, only about half will actually attend. The unmotivated never apply. About half of those who do apply and are accepted are not sufficiently motivated to switch schools. Thus, only the highly motivated finally attend the vocational facility from these sending schools.

CHAPTER VII. EARLY SCHOOL LEAVER INTERVIEWS

As previously noted, the early leavers who were interviewed did not come from the random sample of the Student Flow Survey. Rather, they were selected from training and education programs in the urban community studied in the project. Since this group was not representative of the larger early leaver population, results of these interviews are reported in narrative, rather than statistical, form.

Fifteen programs were contacted as possible sources of early school leavers for the interview/questionnaire procedure. Of these, two agreed to participate, and 23 early leavers were subsequently interviewed.

Twenty-three early leavers completed interviews and questionnaires. These early leavers had dropped out of high school during the last three years. Their insights about the educational process proved very interesting.

Early leavers were almost evenly divided about the wisdom of their decisions to leave school. While some felt they were wrong to leave school, an almost equal number thought that it was the right thing to do, or that they had no other choice at the time. Many early leavers felt that changes must be made in schools and teachers in order for them to have successful educational experiences.

When asked what they would tell friends who wanted to leave school, the early leavers reported overwhelmingly that they would encourage them to remain and finish school. They felt that their friends should "stick it out", because of better job opportunities and because one needs an education to "be somebody".

Many early leavers cited problems with teachers and administrators as their major dissatisfaction with school. There was strong sentiment that the teachers in the schools they had left did not really care about the students, and some of the early leavers expressed approval of the

individualized instruction they were receiving in the training programs.

With few exceptions, the early leavers had made their own decisions about dropping out of school. Most of their parents were unhappy that they had left school, and a few parents placed the blame on the school system.

Almost all of these early leavers would seek vocational training if they had the chance, although a few indicated that they would not go back into high school for it. Many of them knew about vocational education when they were in school, and some had taken vocational courses. A few were repeatedly denied entrance into vocational education programs. Others had never heard of it at all.

It is interesting to note that the majority of these early leavers had definite plans for the future when they left school. It is impossible to generalize this finding to all early leavers due to the selective nature of the group. In general, the early leavers who were interviewed were motivated and goal oriented. They were actively working toward receiving general high school equivalency degrees and productive employment. Although they were dissatisfied and disappointed with the school system, they were currently seeking to obtain educational and vocational training.

CHAPTER VIII. DROPOUT PROGRAMS

In the course of the project, several programs were identified that are focused specifically to early school leavers. Primarily, these were training programs, with emphasis placed on teaching vocational skills to dropouts. Most of the programs were funded by federal dollars; one program operated within the school system. These programs, along with addresses and phone numbers, are listed in Appendix F.

CHAPTER IX. SCHOOL PROFILES

As part of the project grant, school profiles were prepared for five high schools in the two districts in the study. These profiles focused on course offerings, extracurricular activities, and special programs. The intent of preparing school profiles was to offer a total picture of educational offerings in two districts with regional vocational facilities. Information on school profiles is presented in Appendix G.

CHAPTER X. FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

Testing of the research questions yielded interesting results in several areas. Findings and conclusions are reported for each research question.

Question 1

Are vocational education students more or less likely to leave school than their peers in comprehensive high school programs?

The holding power of vocational programs could not be assessed due to a lack of data comparable with the Student Flow Survey. It would be beneficial for the Vocational Education MIS to collect and report data on early school leavers, as well as program completions and non-completions. These data could be used to determine the true holding power of vocational education and would be helpful in evaluating the success of programs.

From the estimations given by facility coordinators, the dropout rates for vocational schools are lower than their affiliated high schools. It is difficult to determine the accuracy of these figures, however, and firm conclusions cannot be based on them.

Question 2

Are certain factors, such as attendance, grades, IQ and test scores, predictors of dropouts?

Significant differences were noted between the means of absences, grade averages, IQ's, and CAT scores for vocational students and early school leavers. These differences are indicative of several things. Vocational education programs apparently are not serving potential early leavers. That part of the school population that would benefit greatly

from vocational education, the dropout-prone, does not have access to it because they leave school before they are eligible and because they are screened out of programs due to poor grades. The early leavers experience greater difficulty in making the transition to high school, as evidenced by the dramatic decreases in attendance and grade averages. Yet, due to selection procedures, these students are forced into academic programs where their chances for school success decline even further. It is interesting to note that both IQ scores and standardized test scores were lower for early school leavers than for vocational students. This presents further evidence of differences between the two groups and lends support to increasing the availability of non-academic programs for potential early leavers.

The data indicate that early leavers can be identified long before they leave school. Efforts should be made to help these students deal with their problems in school, not by excluding them from certain programs but by increasing the options available to them.

Of those vocational students who had considered leaving school, most of them indicated that it was due to poor grades. In spite of academic difficulties, the vocational program provided sufficient incentive to stay in school. This fact strengthens the evidence for providing alternatives, such as vocational education, to academic programs for those who consider dropping out of school.

After examining the data, it appeared that dropping out of school is a symptom of a larger problem, or perhaps several problems. These problems must be dealt with before dropout rates are successfully lowered.

Question 3

What factors contribute to the decision to enter vocational education programs?

Vocational students, for the most part, were motivated and career-oriented. They chose their vocational program because it fit in with their plans for the future. Some students who did not receive their first-choice program due to course overflow chose to remain in vocational education in hopes of getting into the program they desired in eleventh or twelfth grade. It appeared that the most significant factor in motivating students to enter vocational education was an awareness of and commitment to future goals. It would be interesting to determine the reason for this career motivation. Apparently, it occurs before students enter vocational programs. Efforts to increase career orientation might aid students who see no long-term benefits from finishing school.

General satisfaction with school was another characteristic of vocational students. These students really liked their vocational program and the learning associated with it. Again, this affinity for school was probably present long before a student entered a vocational education program, and it contributes to that decision.

Vocational students also enjoyed the social aspects of school. Many of them had lots of friends who were also in vocational education programs, and they were friendly with their vocational teachers, as well. This closeness to both students and teachers proved an important factor in deciding to enter and remain in vocational programs.

In the interview, vocational students frequently mentioned with pride the fact that they were chosen for the program. While no question was asked to elicit this response, many students volunteered it. To these students, there was a certain amount of prestige associated with participation in vocational education. This must also be a factor associated with the decision to enter vocational education programs.

CHAPTER XI. SUGGESTIONS FROM STUDY

Suggestions Based on Study Results

Several suggestions can be made after examining the study data. Vocational education, as it functions in two Rhode Island communities, is not serving the dropout-prone students. These students are being screened out of programs that would present viable alternatives to academic curricula. Vocational education is becoming more selective, and, in terms of serving the total student population, this is a disturbing trend. Vocational education programs should be expanded to incorporate larger numbers of students by making the criteria less rigid. This move would also benefit vocational students who are refused admission into their first-choice programs. The problem seems especially critical in certain program offerings, i.e., auto mechanics, cosmetology, intensive office lab, but students, especially potential dropouts, would benefit from expansion in all areas. This suggestion was also posited by the State Advisory Council on Vocational Education in their study. (Learning for Work, 1977)

Steps should be taken to relate academic courses to vocational programs. Many students are bored with academics and experience difficulty passing. Although early leavers scored lower than vocational students on standardized tests, a majority of both groups scored below the 50th percentile for the national norm. This is indicative of weaknesses in both reading and math skills. Increased emphasis on these basic skills, especially as they relate to vocational course work, would prove beneficial in preparing students for adult life after high school. It would also serve to make the academic portion of vocational education more meaningful.

Vocational students appeared to be highly motivated in terms of future career goals when they entered the program. More emphasis should be placed on career education and vocational planning early in the school experience. For many students, it is too late to begin a concentrated vocational emphasis at the tenth grade. Patterns of school failure have been established long before many students are even eligible for vocational education, so it is not a factor in keeping these people in schools. From the data, it appears that an early awareness of potential problems is the best means of dealing with them -- a preventive, rather than a remedial approach.

Easing the transition into vocational schools would make vocational education a more attractive option for many students. Moving toward a skill center approach to vocational education would allow students to retain ties with their local high schools while participating in vocational education. This approach has also been found to be a more economical way to operate the vocational program (State Advisory Council on Vocational Education, 1977).

Suggestions Based on School Personnel Interviews

School personnel made several suggestions for improving vocational education and for dealing with the dropout problem. They felt that efforts should be made to keep the dropout-prone in school long before high school. Schools should remain flexible and should find new ways of motivating students. Part of this school effort should include making academic course work more relevant to the students.

Vocational education should receive more support from the community, according to school personnel. Students with financial difficulties should have the option of participating in vocational education under some sort

of expanded work-study plan -- in other words, get paid for attending school. It was also recommended that vocational facilities adopt the skill center approach in order to make vocational education more attractive to students in sending communities. Vocational counseling should be available to all students who apply to vocational programs, not just those who are accepted. Vocational counselors should receive additional training and special certification.

Suggestions Based on Student Interviews

Problems with Sending Communities

Nearly a quarter of the students interviewed complained of having to get up too early to attend school. Students from sending communities were especially outspoken, and probably with good reason. Because of transportation schedules, several complained that they have to get up at 5 a.m. to catch a bus at 6 a.m. to get to school by 8 a.m. They frequently do not arrive home in the afternoon before 4 o'clock. Perhaps because of the difficulties of distance and transportation, the regional vocational facilities do not serve as many of the students in sending communities as they might. Very few students outside the host communities in the study came to the vocational school. Those who do come sometimes mention the social problems of coming from outside the host district. Students from sending communities are often characterized by other students as "country hicks". Many drop out of the vocational facility during the first month of school.

A greater effort ought to be made to make it easier for students outside the host community to choose a vocational program. This process should include looking at transportation to find ways of making it more convenient,

as well as looking closely at sending districts to find out why they send so few students to the vocational facility in the first place.

Scheduling

Vocational students volunteered that the school days and class periods were too long. Rigid time scheduling with the same thing every day was, in the words of the students interviewed, "sickening" and "boring". The "week-about" program in which seniors in auto mechanics, carpentry and electronics spend every other week in vocational courses might prove appealing to them. It seems to offer the students more flexibility than traditional class periods.

Changing Schools

Students in the suburban community in the study entered the vocational school in the tenth grade, while students in the urban district began their contacts with the vocational facility in the ninth grade with pre-vocational courses. These students also attended the high school associated with the vocational facility in the ninth grade. For many of the students, entrance into high school in general and the vocational school in particular was socially disruptive: they had to begin again to develop friendships with teachers and students. This was particularly true of students from school districts outside that of the host high school. This tendency showed up especially in the interview question dealing with the students' feeling of closeness to teachers. Students who entered the high school associated with the vocational facility in the ninth grade frequently felt that they knew more teachers and knew them better than did the other students, who entered the school in the tenth grade. They mentioned less frequently the difficulties of being in a new school.

Given the fact that all students have to make the transition from one school to another at some time, the question of the best time for that transition remains. The interviews suggest that the transition is eased when students are acquainted with the vocational program and facility before the tenth grade. The students from sending communities who have the largest readjustment to make might particularly benefit from an early familiarity with the school.

Restrictions

All high school students are apt to chafe at school regulations and restrictions, and the vocational students were no exception. Most of the restrictions that the students cited as annoying, however, were connected not with the vocational program but with the academic part of the school and its administrators. There are apparently fewer rules and regulations that the students consider arbitrary in the vocational school, or the students accept those that are there more easily. The atmosphere of the vocational program seems by nature more relaxed than that of the academic program, and the students respond well to it.

Academic Courses and Vocational Courses

A common complaint of the vocational students was that the material taught in the academic courses did not relate at all to what students were learning in the vocational courses. According to many of those interviewed, each academic course teacher thinks that students should be concerned primarily with his or her subject. Many vocational students find the academic curriculum rigid, boring, and irrelevant, and put up only grudgingly with the academic courses because they are required. A better solution might be to offer vocational students -- especially those who are

not college bound -- the opportunity to take required courses geared toward everyday skills and toward concepts learned in the vocational program. An English course, for example, might offer students the opportunity to learn how to read catalogues, fill out order forms, or write resumes. Work experience and practical application of classroom skills are among the most attractive features of the vocational program to students, and these approaches might easily be transferred to other subject areas to make required subjects more meaningful for the students.

Course Overflow

Students in the vocational program who ended up in their second or third program choice often were unhappy. The interviews also showed that a large number of students elect a particular program because it fits in with their plans for the future. Students in their second or third choice may be taking a program that they have no intention of putting into use in the future and they rapidly become disenchanted with it. The auto mechanics program in the urban vocational facility in the study especially contributed to this problem. More students applied than places were available, and many of these were placed in their second or third program choices. Nearly all expressed dissatisfaction with the program they were in, but they still wanted to get into the auto mechanics program the next year.

Since so many students want to be in the vocational program because of specific programs, a greater effort ought to be made to accommodate them. Better estimates are needed of the demand for each of the particular programs. Guidance counselors also need to recognize that for many potential vocational students, a substitute for the program that the student originally requested will not do.

Guidance Counselors

One major difference between the two vocational facilities in the study lies in the role of the guidance department at each school. In the urban facility, counselors' time was taken up mainly with disciplinary problems and class cutting. Many of the vocational students had never met their counselors. At the suburban facility, counselors took the initiative in setting up appointments with students, and many of the students interviewed felt that they knew guidance counselors well enough to feel comfortable talking with them about a problem. Part of the difference may lie in respective counselor/student ratios: at the suburban facility, that ratio is 175 students per counselor, while each counselor at the urban facility averaged a counseling load of 200 students. The different types of problems among students in each school must also be taken into account. Good guidance seems to be an important part of a good vocational program, and lack of good guidance may cancel out whatever gains the vocational education program offers its students.

Teachers

Several students interviewed were skeptical about the quality of their teachers. Happily, vocational teachers offered a high standard of knowledge and teaching ability against which many of the academic teachers failed to measure up. Students frequently complained that teachers did not know how to come down to the student's level or that teachers did not have time to give remedial help. When asked specifically which teachers these were, students generally did not include the vocational teachers. Students often felt that vocational teachers were better qualified than academic teachers.

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STUDENT INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

PART ONE

SCHOOL EXPERIENCES

1. What do you like in particular about going to school?

2. Is there anything in particular that you dislike about going to school?

3. Is there anything else that you can think of that you specifically like or dislike about going to school?

4. Have you ever thought seriously of dropping out of school? If yes, what reason would you have ranked first if you had decided to drop out of school? What finally made you decide to continue your education?

5. If your best friend came to you and told you that he/she was going to drop out of high school, what would you tell him/her?

6. What vocational program are you currently involved in? How does this fit in with what you help will be your life's work?

7. What made you pick this particular program?

8. From what source did you learn about the vocational program? When did this occur?

PART TWO

PEER GROUP

1. How much school will the majority of your friends complete? If they left school, how much school did they complete?

2. What kind of school programs are your friends in?

3. If we said that a friend was one who really accepts you as a person, and one you like to talk to, and that you enjoy being with, would you say that you are friendly with any one of the teachers or staff members at school? Is there more than one? How many? And of those friends who accept you, that you can talk to, and that you enjoy being with, are any of them among the students at school? How many?

APPENDIX B

PART THREE

INFLUENTIALS

1. If you need help and advice to make a big decision, who would you go to for that advice?

2. If you needed help and advice to make a big decision, who in school would you go to for that advice?

EARLY SCHOOL LEAVER INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

PART ONE

SCHOOL EXPERIENCES

1. What did you like in particular about going to school?

2. Was there anything in particular that you disliked about going to school?

3. Was there anything else that you can think of that you specifically liked or disliked about going to school?

4. Think back to when you left school. Would you say that you or some other person made a decision that you should leave? If yes, what was the most important reason why you left school? Or, if no, would you say it was something that just happened? Why do you think it just happened?

5. If your best friend came to you and told you that he or she was going to leave high school, what would you tell him or her?

6. What have you done since you left school? Is this the general area in which you hope to continue? Or do you have something else in mind?

7. Did you get any vocational or job training in school? Did you know about any vocational or job training that was available to you when you were in school? From whom did you hear about these programs? When, during your school years, did you hear about these programs?

8. What kind of school experiences did you have that were particularly useful to you after you left school? What were they? In what way were they useful?

PART TWO

EQUALS

1. What did your parent(s) or guardian(s) think of your leaving school? Why were they in favor of it or against it?

2. Who do your parent(s) or guardian(s) think is responsible for your leaving school?

3. How much school will the majority of your friends complete? If they left school, how much did they complete?

4. What kind of school programs were your friends in? Check one response.

- ☐ College Prepatory
- ☐ Vocational Education
- ☐ General Studies
- ☐ Business

5. If we said that a friend was one who really accepts you as a person, and one you like to talk to, and that you enjoy being with, would you say that you were friendly with any one of the teachers or staff members at school? How many? And of those friends who accepted you, that you could talk to, and that you enjoyed being with, were any of them among the students at school? How many?

APPENDIX C

PART THREE

REASONS FOR LEAVING

1. Do you think you were right to leave school at the time you did? Why? Why not?

2. At the point of your leaving school, who did you talk to? Did you have any plans for the future? What were they? Would you do the same thing, if you were again faced with the decision? Why? Or why not?

   Did anyone in school, such as a teacher or counselor, encourage you to stay in school? Did anyone suggest any other programs?

3. If you need help and advice to make a big decision, who would you go to for that advice?

4. If you needed help and advice to make a big decision, who in school would you have gone to for that advice?

5. If you had a chance to get some vocational or job training now, would you? Why? Why not?

Name _____

SCHOOL ATTITUDE QUESTIONNAIRE I (SAQ1)

PART ONE

1. Birth Date: _____ _____ _____
   Year Month Day

2. Sex: ___ Male ___ Female

3. Is you mother or female guardian employed? ___ Yes ___ No

   What job does she hold? _____

   What jobs has she held in the past, if different from current job?

   _____

   Check here if she is dead or not at home ☐.

4. Is your father or male guardian employed? ___ Yes ___ No

   What job does he hold? _____

   What jobs has he held in the past, if different from current job?

   _____

   Check here if he is dead or not at home ☐.

5. Would you like doing work like your mother or father does?

   ___ Yes ___ No Explain. _____

   _____

   _____

PART TWO

1. People may differ in how they felt and acted in school. Below are four different student reactions to school.

STUDENT A	STUDENT B
Generally has a good feeling about teachers and school. Does all the work expected. Never has problems of attendance or discipline.	Generally feels all right about teachers and school. Does most of the required work. Attends school most of the time and has almost no problems of attendance or discipline.
STUDENT C	**STUDENT D**
Generally bears with school. Does enough work to pass. Has trouble about attendance or discipline sometimes.	Generally finds school unpleasant. Does little of the expected work. Often does not come to school and has problems of discipline when does attend.

INSTRUCTIONS:

Please put a circle around the letter which most closely matches the way YOU felt and acted in school. Then continue and do the same for the other groups listed below.

a. How YOU felt and acted in school.

A Had good feeling about school; no problems.

B Felt all right about school; almost no problems.

C Tolerated school; problems sometimes.

D Found school unpleasant; often had problems.

b. How YOUR BEST FRIENDS felt when you were in school.

A Had good feeling about school; no problems.

B Felt all right about school; almost no problems.

C Tolerated school; problems sometimes.

D Found school unpleasant; often had problems.

c. Most KIDS IN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD.

A Had good feeling about school; no problems.

B Felt all right about school; almost no problems.

C Tolerated school; problems sometimes.

D Found school unpleasant; often had problems.

d. The LARGEST GROUP in the school you attended.

A Had good feeling about school; no problems.

B Felt all right about school; almost no problems.

C Tolerated school; problems sometimes.

D Found school unpleasant; often had problems.

e. The VOCATIONAL STUDENTS you knew in school.

A Had good feeling about school; no problems.

B Felt all right about school; almost no problems.

C Tolerated school; problems sometimes.

D Found school unpleasant; often had problems.

PART THREE

1. People may belong to many different groups. You are asked to check the group that you belong to from the list below. If you check "OTHER" please use the space to write in the name of the group.

- ☐ White - Not Hispanic
- ☐ Black - Not Hispanic
- ☐ Hispanic
- ☐ Asian/Pacific Islander
- ☐ American Indian/Alaskan Native
- ☐ Other _____
  (name of group)

PART FOUR

Please answer the following questions by circling the number to the left of your answer. Pick only ONE answer for each question.

A. THINK BACK TO WHEN YOU WERE IN SCHOOL AS YOU ANSWER THE NEXT QUESTIONS. PICK ONLY ONE ANSWER FOR EACH QUESTION.

1. Think of your parent(s) or guardian(s). Did they think you could work in school better, the same, or not as well as your friends?

   1 Definitely better
   2 Probably better
   3 Maybe better, but not sure
   4 Probably worse
   5 Definitely worse

2. Think of your friends. When you were in school, could you do school work better, the same, or not as well as your friends?

   1 Better than all of them
   2 Better than most of them
   3 About the same
   4 Poorer than most of them
   5 Poorer than all of them

3. Forget how your teachers marked your work when you were in school. How good do you think your school work was?

   1 Excellent
   2 Good
   3 Fair
   4 Poor
   5 Very poor

4. How often did your parent(s) or guardian(s) ask you about how you were doing in school?

   1 Very often
   2 Often
   3 Occasionally
   4 Not often
   5 Never

B. ANSWER THE NEXT QUESTIONS BY CHOOSING THE ANSWER THAT COMES CLOSEST TO HOW YOU FEEL.

1. People like me will never do well in school even though we try hard.

   1 Strongly agree
   2 Agree
   3 Disagree
   4 Strongly disagree

2. Good luck is more important than hard work for success in life.

1 Strongly agree
2 Agree
3 Disagree
4 Strongly disagree

3. Every time I try to get ahead, something or somebody stops me.

1 Strongly agree
2 Agree
3 Disagree
4 Strongly disagree

4. People like me will not have much of a chance to do what we want to do in life.

1 Strongly agree
2 Agree
3 Disagree
4 Strongly disagree

5. In school, people like me don't have any luck.

1 Strongly agree
2 Agree
3 Disagree
4 Strongly disagree

6. You have to be lucky to get good grades in school.

1 Strongly agree
2 Agree
3 Disagree
4 Strongly disagree

SCHOOL ATTITUDE QUESTIONNAIRE II (SAQII)

PART ONE

1. Birth Date: _____ _____ _____
   Year Month Day

2. Sex: ___ Male ___ Female

3. Is your mother or female guardian employed? ___ Yes ___ No

   What job does she hold? _____

   What jobs has she held in the past, if different from current job?

   _____

   Check here if she is dead or not at home ☐ .

4. Is your father or male guardian employed? ___ Yes ___ No

   What job does he hold? _____

   What jobs has he held in the past, if different from current job?

   _____

   Check here if he is dead or not at home ☐ .

5. Would you like doing work like your mother or father does?

   ___ Yes ___ No Explain. _____

   _____

   _____

PART TWO

1. People may differ in how they feel and act in school. Below are four different student reactions to school.

STUDENT A	STUDENT B
Generally has a good feeling about teachers and school. Does all the work expected. Never has problems of attendance or discipline.	Generally feels all right about teachers and school. Does most of the required work. Attends school most of the time and has almost no problems of attendance or discipline.
STUDENT C	**STUDENT D**
Generally bears with school. Does enough work to pass. Has trouble about attendance or discipline sometimes.	Generally finds school unpleasant. Does little of the expected work. Often does not come to school and has problems of discipline when does attend.

INSTRUCTIONS:

Please put a circle around the letter which most closely matches the way YOU feel and act in school. Then continue and do the same for the other groups listed below.

a. How YOU feel and act in school.

   A Good feeling about school; no problems.

   B Feels all right about school; almost no problems.

   C Tolerates school; problems sometimes.

   D Finds school unpleasant; has problems often.

b. How YOUR BEST FRIENDS feel in school.

   A Good feeling about school; no problems.

   B Feels all right about school; almost no problems

   C Tolerates school; problems sometimes.

   D Finds school unpleasant; has problems often.

c. Most KIDS IN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD.

A Good feeling about school; no problems.

B Feels all right about school; almost no problems.

C Tolerates school; problems sometimes.

D Finds school unpleasant; has problems often.

d. The LARGEST GROUP in the school you attend.

A Good feeling about school; no problems.

B Feels all right about school; almost no problems.

C Tolerates school; problems sometimes.

D Finds school unpleasant; has problems often.

e. The VOCATIONAL STUDENTS you know.

A Good feeling about school; no problems.

B Feels all right about school; almost no problems.

C Tolerates school; problems sometimes.

D Finds school unpleasant; has problems often.

PART THREE

1. People may belong to many different groups. You are asked to check the group that you belong to from the list below. If you check "OTHER" please use the space to write in the name of the group.

- ☐ White - Not Hispanic
- ☐ Black - Not Hispanic
- ☐ Hispanic
- ☐ Asian/Pacific Islander
- ☐ American Indian/Alaskan Native
- ☐ Other _____
  (name of group)

PART FOUR

A. PLEASE ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS BY CIRCLING THE NUMBER TO THE LEFT OF YOUR ANSWER. PICK ONLY ONE ANSWER FOR EACH QUESTION.

1. Think of your parent(s) or guardian(s). Do they think you can work in school better, the same, or not as well as your friends?

   1 Definitely better
   2 Probably better
   3 Maybe better, but not sure
   4 Probably worse
   5 Definitely worse

2. Think of your friends. Can you do school work better, the same, or not as well as your friends?

   1 Better than all of them
   2 Better than most of them
   3 About the same
   4 Poorer than most of them
   5 Poorer than all of them

3. Forget how your teachers mark your work. How good do you think your school work is?

   1 Excellent
   2 Good
   3 Fair
   4 Poor
   5 Very poor

4. How often do your parent(s) or guardian(s) ask you about how you are doing in school?

   1 Very often
   2 Often
   3 Occasionally
   4 Not often
   5 Never

B. ANSWER THE NEXT QUESTIONS BY CHOOSING THE ANSWER THAT COMES CLOSEST TO HOW YOU FEEL.

1. People like me will never do well in school even though we try hard.

   1 Strongly agree
   2 Agree
   3 Disagree
   4 Strongly disagree

2. Good luck is more important than hard work for success in life.

1 Strongly agree
2 Agree
3 Disagree
4 Strongly disagree

3. Every time I try to get ahead, something or somebody stops me.

1 Strongly agree
2 Agree
3 Disagree
4 Strongly disagree

4. People like me will not have much of a chance to do what we want to do in life.

1 Strongly agree
2 Agree
3 Disagree
4 Strongly disagree

5. In school, people like me don't have any luck.

1 Strongly agree
2 Agree
3 Disagree
4 Strongly disagree

6. You have to be lucky to get good grades in school.

1 Strongly agree
2 Agree
3 Disagree
4 Strongly disagree

APPENDIX D

104.

HIGH SCHOOL PERSONNEL QUESTIONNAIRE

TITLE _____

SCHOOL _____

DATE _____

1. a) Are you currently active in any dropout prevention program in your school or elsewhere? If so, describe.

   b) If not, would you be interested in joining or implementing one? Why or why not? If so, what type?

2. Length of employment -- a) as administrator _____

   b) as guidance counselor _____

   c) at current school _____

   d) in this city _____

3. If a student told you he or she was dropping out, what would be your reaction?

4. Do you know approximately what the dropout rate is for this school?

5. Do you think this rate is --

   a) high _____

   b) low _____

   c) about average _____

6. What measures do you suggest be taken to curb the dropout tendencies?

7. What are you personally doing to curb the dropout tendencies?

8. Do you feel that Vocational Education is an important part of the learning program in this city? Why or why not?

9. Would you agree with the statement that one of the functions of Vocational Education is to help save potential high school dropouts? If so, why? If not, why not?

10. a) If you agree with the above statement, do you feel that Vocational Education is effective in the sense of saving potential high school dropouts? In what way?

    b) If you disagree with the above statement, how do you think the vocational education programs could be improved to help save potential high school dropouts?

11. Are you currently counseling Vocational Education students? If so, what kind of counseling services are being provided for these students?

12. Are you involved in vocational or job counseling with other students? If yes, what kind of counseling?

FOR COMPREHENSIVE HIGH SCHOOL COUNSELORS ONLY --

13. What kind of information on the vocational education programs do you make available to the students you counsel?

APPENDIX E

SCHOOL RECORD DATA COLLECTION SHEET

ID Code ⌊⌋⌋⌋⌋ (1-4)

Column 5 S code ⌊⌋ (5)

Column 6 ⌊⌋

CAT Reading ⌊⌋⌋ (7-8)

Math ⌊⌋⌋ (9-10)

Courses Failed (up to 6 courses) ⌊⌋⌋⌋⌋⌋⌋⌋⌋⌋⌋⌋ (11-22)

01 English/Language Arts
02 Math
03 Science
04 Social Science
05 Gym
06 Pre-Voc
07 Foreign Language
08 Other

Academic Average

6th grade ⌊⌋⌋ (23-24)

7th grade ⌊⌋⌋ (25-26)

8th grade ⌊⌋⌋ (27-28)

9th grade ⌊⌋⌋ (29-30)

10th grade ⌊⌋⌋ (31-32)

Reading Level (grade level) ⌊⌋⌋.⌊⌋ (33-35)

IQ ⌊⌋⌋⌋ (36-38)

Number of Grades Repeated ⌊⌋ (39)

BLANK (40)

APPENDIX F

Disciplinary, Personality and Family Information

Number of Suspensions

9th grade:

Less than one full day ⌊⌊⌋ (41-42)

One full day or more ⌊⌊⌋ (43-44)

10th grade:

Less than one full day ⌊⌊⌋ (45-46)

One full day or more ⌊⌊⌋ (47-48)

Number of Days Absent (actual days absent)

6th grade ⌊⌊⌊⌋ (49-51)

7th grade ⌊⌊⌊⌋ (52-54)

8th grade ⌊⌊⌊⌋ (55-57)

9th grade ⌊⌊⌊⌋ (58-60)

10th grade ⌊⌊⌊⌋ (61-63)

Number of Children in Family (including student) ⌊⌊⌋ (64-65)

Student's Position in Family (birth order) ⌊⌊⌋ (66-67)

Parents' Education (number of years of schooling completed)

Mother ⌊⌊⌋ (68-69)

Father ⌊⌊⌋ (70-71)

PROGRAMS FOR DROPOUTS

Joslin Multi-Service Center 231 Amherst Street Providence, RI 02908 Phone - 421-8062	Staffed by Department of Vocational Rehabilitation
OIC 45 Hamilton Street Providence, RI 02907 Phone - 272-4400	Training program for high school dropouts
Project Contact Pleasant View School Obadiah Brown Road Providence, RI 02908 Phone - 331-2606	Concerned with unserved individuals, including dropouts
CETA 5 Cathedral Square Providence, RI 02903 Phone - 861-0800	
Apprenticeship Information Center Department of Employment Security 40 Fountain Street Providence, RI 02903 Phone - 277-3562	
Da Vinci Center for Community Progress, Inc. 525 Charles Street Providence, RI 02904 Phone - 831-5252	Social service agency
Project PATHS 235 Promenade Street Providence, RI 02908 Phone - 272-4153	
Urban League Minority Counseling Program Project Outreach 246 Prairie Avenue Providence, RI 02905 Phone - 351-5000	

Job Corps
40 Fountain Street
Providence, RI 02903
Phone - 277-3553

Youth Employment Training Program (YETP)
Department of Community Affairs
150 Washington Street
Providence, RI 02903
Phone - 277-3750

Cranston Community Action Program
30 Rolfe Street
Cranston, RI 02910
Phone - 467-9610

APPENDIX G

COURSES COMMON TO SCHOOLS IN THE SUBURBAN DISTRICT
(Grades 10-12)

*English

1. English (@ 3 levels)
2. Advanced Placement English
3. Journalism
4. Advanced Journalism
5. Introduction to Theater
6. Advanced Theater (production & directing)
7. The Novel

*Social Studies

1. World History II
2. Sociology
3. Psychology
4. U.S. History Advanced Placement
5. U.S. History
6. Youth and the Law

*Foreign Languages

1. French (@ 3 levels)
2. German (@ 3 levels)
3. Italian (@ 4 levels)
4. Latin
5. Spanish (@ 4 levels)

*Mathematics

1. Algebra (@ 2 levels)
2. Advanced Algebra & Trigonometry
3. Advanced Computer Mathematics/Introduction to Computer Mathematics
4. Geometry
5. Review Mathematics
6. Advanced Geometry
7. Introduction to Computer Mathematics

*Science

1. Biology
2. Marine Studies
3. Chemistry
4. Drug Education - Peer Approach (@ 2 levels)
5. Physics

*Business

1. Accounting
2. Bookkeeping (@ 2 levels)
3. Personal Typing
4. Typing (@ 2 levels)
5. Data Processing
6. Shorthand (@ 2 levels)
7. Transcription
8. General Clerical Procedures

*Industrial Arts

1. Mechanical Drawing (@ 2 levels)
2. Architectural Drawing (@ 2 levels)
3. Electronics (@ 3 levels)
4. Auto Mechanics (@ 2 levels)
5. Metal Working
6. Machine Shop (@ 3 levels)
7. Pringing (@ 2 levels)
8. Woodworking (@ 2 levels)

*Home Economics

1. Child Development
2. Clothing (@ 2 levels)
3. Family Relations
4. Foods (@ 2 levels)
5. Home Management

*Art

1. Introduction to Art
2. Art Studies

*Music

1. Stage Band
2. Band
3. Choir
4. Music Theory

*Physical Education

1. Physical Education (@ 3 levels)

*Courses Unique to High School A

1. Applied Writing
2. Writing Prose
3. Vocabulary/Spelling
4. Business/Social Communications
5. Advanced Reading Skills
6. Writing/Speaking
7. Reference/Resource Use
8. Language
9. World Short Stories
10. Searching Short Stories
11. Theoretic Poetry
12. Techniques of Poetry
13. Adventuresome Biographies
14. Great Modern Plays
15. Shakespeare's Tragedies
16. Contemporary Issues
17. Personal Essays
18. Prejudice and Values
19. The Good Life
20. The American Dream
21. The Artist
22. Advanced Theater - Acting/Directing "2"
23. Advanced Theater - Production "1"
24. Advanced Theater - Production "2"
25. Hebrew
26. Jewish Culture
27. Social Studies Introduction; W. History "1"; W. History "2"
28. World History "2", A. P.
29. American Political Process/Economics, Honors
30. American Political Process/Economics
31. Asian Studies/Economics
32. 20th Century Europe/Economics
33. Rhode Island History
34. Problems of Democracy
35. Epic
36. Human Ecology
37. French 4
38. French 10, Honors
39. French 11, Honors
40. French 12, Honors
41. Italian 10, Honors
42. Italian 11, Honors
43. Italian 12, Honors
44. Spanish 10, Honors
45. Spanish 11, Honors
46. Spanish 12, Honors
47. Advanced Math
48. Calculus/Analytic Geometry, Honors
49. Computer Technology
50. Modified Geometry

51. Geometry - A Transformational Approach
52. General Mathematics
53. Probability/Statistical Application
54. Selected Topics in Mathematics
55. Advanced Science
56. College Preparatory Biology and Lab
57. College Preparatory Chemistry and Lab
58. College Preparatory Physics and Lab
59. Senior Science
60. Advanced Secretarial Practice
61. Business Law and Business Machines
62. Business Math
63. Clerical/Mathematics
64. Salesmanship
65. Personal Typing 2
66. Retailing
67. Classes on Personal Economics
68. Mechanical Drawing 3
69. Auto Mechanics 3
70. Printing 3 and 4
71. Photography in Graphics
72. IBM Composition
73. Woodworking 3 and 4
74. Clothing 3
75. Two Dimensional Design and Art Service
76. Three Dimensional Art
77. Drawing and Painting
78. Art Major
79. Humanities
80. A Capella Choir

*Courses Unique to High School B

1. Modes of Narration
2. Styles of Exposition
3. Forms of Argument
4. Practical English Usage
5. Research Skills
6. Imaginative Skills
7. Drama
8. Survey of World Literature
9. Survey of American Literature
10. Survey of English Literature
11. Library Media Techniques
12. Anthropology (@ 2 levels)
13. American Political Studies
14. Economics
15. Humanities
16. Epic
17. History and Literature of the Jewish People
18. Elementary French Conversation
19. Advanced French Conversation
20. Elementary Italian Conversation
21. Advanced Italian Conversation
22. Latin (levels 2 and 3)
23. Elementary Spanish Conversation
24. Advanced Spanish Conversation
25. Russian (@ 2 levels)
26. Hebrew as a Foreign Language
27. Math Aide
28. Mathematics of Astronomy (Parts 1 and 2)
29. Introduction to History of Mathematics
30. Introduction to Computer Technology
31. General Mathematics
32. Introduction to Basic College Mathematics
33. Advanced Mathematics
34. Calculus and Analytical Geometry
35. Applied Life Science
36. Ecology and the Environment
37. Applied Chemistry
38. Applied Physical Science
39. Applied Science
40. Enriched Laboratory Experiences
41. Science and Society
42. Principles of Management
43. Consumer Economics
44. Business Communications
45. Business Mathematics
46. Principles of Accounting
47. Basic Computer Programming/Laboratory
48. Business Laboratory
49. Typing III
50. Note-Taking

51. Architectural Drawing V
52. Basic Electricity
53. Power Mechanics
54. You and Your Car
55 Advanced Metal Working
56. Basic Carpentry and Home Repair
57. Home Nursing
58. Home Management
59. Interior Decorating
60. Advanced Art (@ 2 levels)
61. Art Studio 3
62. Introductory Ceramics and Sculpture
63. Advanced Ceramics and Sculpture
64. Instrumental Ensemble
65. Instrumental Class
66. Chorus
67. Madrigals
68. Basic Keyboard Skill
69. Intermediate Keyboard Skill
70. Teacher Assistant
71. Cooperative Education
72. Career Exploration

COURSES COMMON TO SCHOOLS IN THE URBAN DISTRICT
(GRADES 9-12)

*English

1. Business English
2. English (4 levels)

*Mathematics

1. Basic Math
2. Algebra (3 levels)
3. Trigonometry (included in 3rd level algebra)

*Social Studies

1. Western Civilization
2. Youth and the Law (The Law and You)
3. American Civilization (2 levels)
4. Sociology
5. Psychology
6. Current Affairs

*Science

1. Biology
2. Physics
3. Chemistry
4. Physiology

*Foreign Languages

1. French (4 levels)
2. Spanish (4 levels)
3. Italian (4 levels)

*Business

1. Typing (3 levels)
2. Bookkeeping (2 levels)
3. Shorthand (2 levels)
4. Business Math
5. Distributive Education (2 levels)
6. Recordkeeping
7. Business Law
8. Consumer Economics (or Awareness)
9. Office Procedures (clerical practice)

*Fine Arts

1. Drawing and Painting
2. Ceramics (2 levels)

*Industrial Arts

1. Art Metal (2 levels)
2. Mechanical Drawing (3 levels)
3. Woodworking

*Home Economics

1. Foods (2 levels)
2. Clothing (2 levels)

*Physical Education

1. Boys' Gym (4 levels)
2. Girls' Gym (4 levels)

*A.) Courses Unique to High School A

1. Basic Math (Levels II and III)
2. Calculus
3. Exploring Human Nature
4. Introduction to Science (@ 2 levels)
5. Biology (BSCS)
6. Chemistry II
7. Oceanography
8. Horticulture
9. Advanced Placement Biology
10. Advanced Placement Physics
11. Arts Magnet (Art, Music, Theatre, Dance, Creative Writing)
12. Introduction To Business
13. Consumer Education
14. Sales
15. Distributive Education (3rd level in the field)
16. Small Business Management
17. Taxes
18. Careers in Business
19. Introduction to Accounting
20. Student Activities Office
21. Portuguese (@ 3 levels)
22. Portuguese for Native Speakers
23. Art for Beginners
24. Drawing and Design (@ 4 levels)
25. Weaving (@ 3 levels)
26. Independent Study in Art
27. Hand Crafts
28. Art History
29. Guitar
30. Chorus
31. Band
32. Orchestra
33. Music Appreciation
34. Music Theory
35. Career Cluster
36. Auto Mechanics (@ 2 levels)
37. Electronics (@ 3 levels)
38. Wood (@ 2 levels)
39. World of Construction (@ 2 levels)

*B.) Courses Unique to High School B

1. Drama (@ 2 levels)
2. Journalism/Sports in School
3. Stagecraft (@ 2 levels)
4. Elementary Functions
5. Basic Math II
6. Consumer Math
7. Computer Math and Trigonometry
8. Modified Algebra (@ 2 levels)
9. American Civilization/Sociology
10. American Civilization/Economics
11. American History
12. European History
13. Philosophy
14. Social Studies
15. World History
16. Band
17. Choir
18. History and Theory of Music
19. Beginning Course in Music
20. Guitar Workshop
21. Anthropology
22. Astronomy
23. Botany
24. Ecology
25. General Science (@ 2 levels)
26. Horticulture
27. Medical Technology
28. Oceanology
29. Zoology
30. Medical Terminology/Secretarical
31. Apex
32. Bookkeeping III
33. Business Machines
34. Business Communications
35. Business Principles
36. Business Economics/Sales
37. Lester Hill
38. Notehand
39. Personal Typing (@ 2 levels)
40. Recordkeeping II
41. Sales/Advertising
42. Transcription (@ 2 levels)
43. Work Experience
44. Shorthand III
45. Art (@ 2 levels)
46. Art History
47. Auto Mechanics (@ 3 levels)
48. Electronics (@ 3 levels)
49. Industrial Technology
50. Woodworking II and III
51. Printing (Communications)
52. Building Construction and Improvement

*A.) Courses Unique to High School C

1. Vocational English (3 levels)
2. Reading Laboratory
3. Honors English (3 levels)
4. Preparation for SATs (English/math)
5. Vocational Math (3 levels)
6. Basic Math II
7. Applied Math (2 levels)
8. Applied Math Carpentry
9. Applied Math Machine Shop
10. Applied Math Sheet Metal
11. Consumer Math
12. Remedial Basic Math
13. Pre-Algebra
14. Basic Math for Spanish Speaking
15. Advanced American History
16. Black History
17. Seniors Meet Society
18. Great Persons in History
19. Mid-East/Far East Studies
20. Vocational Physics
21. Vocational Chemistry
22. General Science
23. Chemistry II
24. Chemistry for Cosmetology
25. Physics II
26. Vocational Small Business (3 levels)
27. Personal Typing and Notetaking (seniors); college prep.
28. Advanced Typing and Machine Transcription
29. Business English (3 levels)
30. Advanced Bookkeeping
31. Business Core Curriculum (3 levels)
32. Exploratory Business
33. Office Practice
34. Small Business Opportunities
35. Secretarial Procedures
36. Business Principles
37. Introduction to Data Processing
38. Management Systems and Processes
39. Accounting I
40. Recordkeeping II
41. Work Study Filing
42. Italian Culture
43. Spanish Civilization
44. Spanish for Native Speakers
45. General Art
46. Drawing and Painting II
47. Ceramics III
48. Silk Screen (@ 3 levels)
49. Photography (@ 2 levels)
50. Advanced Art
51. Weaving
52. Machine Shop
53. Sheet Metal
54. Graphic Arts
55. Blueprint Reading
56. Rubber Mold Making

57. Small Engines
58. Jewelry Soldering
59. Vocational Mechanical Drawing (@ 3 levels)
60. Child Development
61. Family Living
62. Health (Boys and Girls)
63. Vocational Gym (Boys and Girls)
64. ESL (@ 3 levels)
65. Bi-Lingual Western Civilization
66. Bi-Lingual American Civilization
67. Bi-Lingual Auto (@ 3 levels)
68. School Work Release
69. Cooperative Work Experience
70. Distributive Education Co-Op

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES COMMON TO SCHOOLS IN THE SUBURBAN DISTRICT

*Sports

1. Wrestling
2. Football
3. Soccer
4. Track (indoor; outdoor; cross-country)
5. Field Hockey (girls' interscholastic)
6. Basketball (boys' and girls')
7. Ice Hockey
8. Swimming

*Clubs and Activities

1. Audio-Visual Aids
2. Band
3. Student Council
4. Cheerleaders
5. Debating Club
   Italian Club
7. Spanish Club
8. French Club
9. Girls' Athletic Association
10. Drama Club
11. Library Aides
12. Girls' Leader Corps
13. Choir

*Extracurricular Activities Unique to High School A

1. Mixed Chorus
2. Ushers
3. Basketball Club
4. Computer Club
5. Correspondence Corps
6. DECA
7. Fishing Club
8. German Club
9. Hockey Club
10. Art Service
11. Medical Arts
12. Math Team
13. Modern Dance
14. P. A. System
15. Soccer Club
16. Spanish Honor Society

*Extracurricular Activities Unique to High School B

1. Girls' Cross-Country
2. Girls' Gymnastics
3. Girls' Intramural Basketball
4. Girls' Intramural Volleyball (co-ed)
5. Girls' Intramural Tennis
6. Girls' Intramural Archery

7. Girls' Intramural Softball
8. Girls' Intramural Field Hockey
9. Golf
10. Tennis
11. Boys' Intramural Floor Hockey
12. Boys' Intramural Basketball
13. Boys' Intramural Volleyball (co-ed)
14. Boys' Intramural Tennis
15. Art Studio
16. Future Nurses
17. Future Teachers
18. Latin Club
19. Russian Club
20. Letterman's Club
21. Girls' Chorus
22. Ski Club
23. Toastmasters

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES COMMON TO SCHOOLS IN THE URBAN DISTRICT

*Sports

1. Basketball
2. Football
3. Hockey
4. Wrestling
5. Baseball
6. Cross-Country
7. Indoor Track
8. Outdoor Track
9. Junior Varsity Baseball; Football
10. Cheerleaders (Football, Basketball, Hockey and Wrestling)

*Clubs and Activities

1. Yearbook
2. Drama or Theater
3. Student Government

*Extracurricular Activities Not Common to All Schools:

*High School A

1. Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA)
2. "Close-Up"
3. Prom Committees (Junior and Senior)
4. Model Legislature
5. Tennis
6. Girls' Gymnastics
7. Soccer
8. Golf
9. In-Site
10. Majorettes
11. Hopettes

*High School B

1. Soccer
2. Girls' Cross-Country
3. Girls' Track (indoor and outdoor)
4. Girls' Basketball
5. Boys' and Girls' Gymnastics
6. Girls' Volleyball
7. Golf
8. Pep Squad
9. Majorettes
10. Ski Club
11. Bookstore
12. Decca (Student Store)

*High School C

1. School Newspaper
2. Science Fair
3. Biology Club
4. Outing Club
5. VICA (Vocational Industrial Clubs of America)
6. Freshman Basketball
7. Girls' Interscholastic Basketball
8. Girls' Interscholastic Volleyball
9. Girls' Intramural Baseball